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THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE
RESEARCHING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, VIOLENCE AND TRAFFICKING

OAK FOUNDATION

BEING HEARD:
PROMOTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S INVOLVEMENT IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Findings from an international scoping review

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GLOSSARY

Violence against children	"All forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse" (Pinheiro, 2006; UNCRC, 1989).
Sexual violence	"Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work." (Jewkes, Sen & Garcia-Moreno, 2002).
Children and young people (C&YP)	'Child' means any person up to the age of 18 (UNCRC, 1989) whereas the terms 'young person' and 'young people' refer to the age range between 10 and 24 years (Hagell, Shah and Coleman, 2017). The report primarily, though not invariably, focuses on young people between the ages of 15 and 24, reflecting the available data.
C&YP's participation	Forms of social engagement relating to C&YP's right to be involved in decisions that affect their lives: C&YP "taking part in and influencing processes, decisions, and activities that affect them, in order to achieve greater respect for their rights" (Lansdown, 2003, p. 273).
Participatory research	Any research that entails a degree of collaboration between those undertaking the research and those who are typically 'the researched' (Pain, 2004). In the context of child/youth participatory research, the term refers to opportunities for C&YP to inform the research design and process beyond solely providing information. Degrees of collaboration (and therefore 'participatory practice') will vary along a spectrum from opportunities to consult on some of the issues to research which is fully instigated and led by participant-researchers (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2015).
Consultation	Research initiatives that elicit C&YP's perspectives and offer them opportunities for influence (Ibid.).
Collaborative research	Research projects in which adults work in varying degrees of partnership with C&YP, creating opportunities for them to actively influence the design and processes of projects and to share decision-making. Research generally remains adult-initiated although its inception and development may be informed by C&YP (Ibid.).
Child/youth-led research	Research projects that are initiated and led by C&YP. Entails providing opportunities (and resources) to enable C&YP to initiate and run their own activities. Processes are owned and led by C&YP, but adults may facilitate, provide resources, funding or guidance and support on aspects of their work (Ibid.).
(Adult) professional researcher(s)/ facilitator(s)	Trained adult professionals who work in a capacity related to research and/or participation in academia, the private, governmental and/or non-governmental sector or related fields. Their role varies according to the levels of C&YP's participation (see above) and power-sharing arrangements between the adult and C&YP involved in a given research project.
Participant-researcher	Individuals (not necessarily C&YP) who are typically 'subjects' of research but who take on the role of a 'researcher' in a participatory study. Unlike professional researchers/facilitators, participant-researchers are usually not formally trained and do not work in a professional research capacity.
Young researcher(s)	Participant-researchers (see above) up to the age of 24.
Research subject(s)/ respondent(s)	Those who are the 'researched' or 'subjects' of the research study, e.g. individuals who fill out questionnaires, respond to surveys, are observed as part of ethnographic studies, or participate in interviews, focus groups or other research activities.
Participant(s)	Those who are invited to 'participate' in a project or research study (participatory or non-participatory). The term can refer to participant-researchers and/or respondents but usually does not include 'professional' researchers.

ABBREVIATIONS

C&YP	Children and young people
CRC	(United Nations) Convention on the Rights of the Child
HIC	High-income countries
LMIC	Low- and middle-income countries
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PAG	Project advisory group
SVAC	Sexual violence against children
SVRI	Sexual Violence Research Initiative

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Any errors in the report are the responsibility of the authors.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE SCOPING REVIEW

This report presents findings from an international scoping review about the involvement of children and young people (C&YP) in participatory research on sexual violence. The scoping review was commissioned as part of the 'Being Heard' project, a collaboration between the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) and the University of Bedfordshire's International Centre: Researching child sexual exploitation, violence and trafficking (IC). It was commissioned to inform work on promoting ethical and meaningful child/youth participatory research on sexual violence. The project ran from January to December 2017 and was funded by Oak Foundation.

In the context of this scoping review, 'participatory research' is defined as any research that entails a degree of collaboration between those undertaking the research and those who are typically 'the researched' (Pain, 2004). The conceptual framework used here draws from Lansdown and O'Kane's (2015) 'participation continuum', whereby participatory involvement of C&YP ranges from 'consultation' at one end, to 'child/youth-led' research initiatives at the other, with different levels of 'collaboration' in between these two ends of the spectrum (see Figure 1, p. 28).

The scoping review is a multi-method study; in addition to identifying relevant academic publications (n=76) and grey literature (n=42), data was elicited through a call for evidence (n=56), a small number (n=10) of key informant interviews and a consultation with international delegates (n=37) as part of a pre-conference workshop that was held at the SVRI Forum in September 2017 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. 112 of these resources were cited in the final review and form the evidence base for this report. The report also draws on additional background literature, identified through hand-searches, to substantiate and contextualise key themes that emerged as scoping progressed.

THE FINDINGS

1 Participatory research practice in this field is still emerging

Overall, the scoping review found very little practice that involved C&YP in participatory research on sexual violence or related topics. Of relevant examples identified, the majority were consultative (n=53) and collaborative (n=46), with very few examples (n=4) of child/youth-led research (see Table 2, p. 33).

Due to the lack of evidence specifically on participatory research in this area, the scoping review also draws from learning about children's and youth participatory initiatives more broadly. This attempts to give us a better understanding of the barriers and challenges associated with C&YP's engagement in participatory practice on sensitive topics.

Most of the data underpinning this scoping review originates in Europe, North America and, to a lesser extent, Australia, reflecting an existing evidence base that is skewed towards high-income countries (HIC). Although efforts have been made to locate relevant resources from a range of geographical areas around the world, including from low- and middle-income countries (LMIC), the findings presented here must be seen in the context of what has been published rather than as a genuine reflection of all participatory research activities that exist globally.

2 There is evidence of benefits to multiple stakeholders of involving C&YP in participatory research addressing sexual violence against children

The evidence reviewed suggests that C&YP's participatory involvement in sexual violence research can have a range of benefits to:

(i) the research community;

(ii) those involved in such initiatives; and

(iii) the constituencies and communities they represent.

Participatory approaches can enhance the evidence base on sexual violence against C&YP by incorporating the insights of those affected, directly or otherwise. Such approaches can add relevance and credibility to research findings and help to inform thinking on the prevention of, and responses to, sexual violence against children (SVAC). C&YP's participatory involvement can potentially add value to all stages of the research process, including the research design, ethics, governance, participant recruitment and engagement, data collection and analysis, and dissemination (see Table 3, p. 34). Participatory approaches are conducive to redressing power differentials in research, including between those present in data collection processes. For example, involving young researchers has been shown, in some instances, to promote engagement between researchers and respondents, facilitating the gathering of sensitive information that might otherwise be difficult to access.

Participatory research can also offer a range of benefits to C&YP affected by SVAC, both at individual and collective levels. Involvement in participatory research addressing sexual violence can present opportunities for C&YP to develop confidence, acquire new skills and strengthen resilience. It can give those involved in such initiatives a chance to represent their views to wider stakeholders. The act of 'self-representation' may offer some therapeutic benefits to those directly involved in such initiatives. It can also benefit wider communities of C&YP by establishing them as political agents for social change, and by raising awareness of SVAC and its consequences.

3 Barriers to initiation of child/youth participatory research on sexual violence

Despite evidence of benefits, there are significant barriers to C&YP's involvement in participatory research addressing sexual violence. These include:

(i) reluctance to engage with vulnerability, including concerns over managing risk and pre-empting re-traumatisation and secondary/vicarious trauma;

(ii) lack of confidence and knowhow amongst the wider research community of age-appropriate, participatory and creative methods, and more broadly, of safely and meaningfully involving C&YP in sexual violence research;

(iii) (perceived) lack of C&YP's competencies in relation to their ability to undertake research and handle sensitive topics.

C&YP's vulnerabilities must be central in thinking about whether and how an individual can be engaged in participatory research safely. For many individuals, involvement in particular research projects may be neither desired nor ethically appropriate.

Many of the ethical considerations around involving vulnerable children in research equally apply to vulnerable adults. There are additional legal requirements arising from national and international legal frameworks relating to those under 18. Child protection is not only a moral or ethical issue but a legal requirement. Researchers must carefully consider the legal obligations alongside the ethical implications of involving vulnerable C&YP in sexual violence research, including the risks of re-traumatisation and secondary/vicarious trauma.

C&YP affected by sexual violence may not see themselves or be perceived by others as 'vulnerable'. It is important to recognise, however, that individuals who have experienced significant trauma may have complex needs and may require additional advocacy and support during, and potentially beyond, their involvement in research. This is likely to have time and resource implications for project staff and research organisations. Sexual violence research, participatory or otherwise, must be trauma-informed, especially when engaging vulnerable groups; it needs to be facilitated by trained staff with specialist (participatory, youth work and/or therapeutic) skills and underpinned by adequate levels of time, training and resources.

The complexities associated with this work may explain why child/youth participatory research on sexual violence represents a very small proportion of research in this area. The dearth of academic literature suggests that there is a tendency amongst academic researchers to shy away from the associated risks. Given that risks can never be completely avoided, some researchers suggest a focus on working with and managing risk as opposed to adopting more risk-averse approaches. Such perspectives highlight that an experience of sexual violence should not automatically preclude C&YP's involvement in participatory research opportunities. When weighing up the risks of C&YP's participation in research, the potential benefits of their involvement and the risks of non-involvement should be considered equally.

4 Complexities of participatory research on sexual violence against children: challenges and strategies

Learning from participatory research and wider participatory practice involving vulnerable groups on sensitive issues highlight the complexities of such processes. This report discusses several specific challenges that can arise during such processes, and strategies to address them. Research processes and C&YP's involvement in them can vary, and the report attempts to discuss identified challenges and strategies corresponding to different stages of the research process (outlined in Table 3, p. 34):

(i) Research oversight and governance: C&YP's involvement in research oversight and governance usually comes through their role in advisory or steering groups. While these can be organised in different ways, and provide important opportunities for influence, there may also be significant limitations on C&YP's ability to exert control through these mechanisms.

(ii) Ethical approval: Ethics committees fulfil the crucial role of ensuring that potential harm to research participants/respondents and researchers is minimised. Committee members may not always have the relevant expertise, however, to scrutinise and provide guidance on developing ethical participatory research in this area.

(iii) Recruitment and engagement: Sexual violence is highly stigmatised; consequently, C&YP may feel reluctant to be associated with this topic or may face opposition from their family, friends or community in relation to participating in sexual violence research.

The transient and complex lives of some marginalised C&YP can also create logistical barriers to their involvement and mean that some groups are rarely engaged in participatory research. Specialist services can sometimes facilitate and support the involvement of marginalised C&YP. These services, however, may themselves struggle to prioritise involvement in

research due to lack of time and resources and a focus on crisis prevention.

The common practice of accessing participant-researchers and respondents through specialist service providers also raises questions in relation to access and diversity. It can compromise the representational quality of the group involved in participatory research.

(iv) Consent: How to negotiate C&YP's informed and engaged consent to participate in research on sexual violence in an ethical and meaningful manner is a critical question. It can be particularly challenging with younger children, those with low literacy and/or learning difficulties. Age-appropriate, trauma-informed, arts-based, creative, audio, visual and interactive methods can help to ensure that consent is informed and meaningful.

(v) Data collection and analysis: Involving vulnerable C&YP in data collection and analysis in the context of sexual violence research can raise serious concerns if those involved are not sufficiently prepared and supported, and if research activities are not facilitated properly. Several specific issues were noted:

- Participatory approaches, including those involving peer researchers in data collection activities, can facilitate the sharing of potentially sensitive data that would be otherwise difficult to access. The potentially close proximity between participant-researchers and respondents, however, raises ethical concerns in relation to informed consent and how such data is handled and anonymised. There may also be instances where participant-researchers may struggle to distance themselves and critically reflect on the evidence gathered.
- Sexualised forms of violence are often normalised, including by those who experience, witness and/or perpetrate them. The normalisation of sexual violence can undermine ethical and effective research practice, for example, by compromising (adult and child/youth) researchers' sensitive interviewing skills, empathy, and ability to recognise and identify experiences as abuse. Poor understanding of sexual violence can also inform research findings and potentially produce (and disseminate) unhelpful messages about SVAC.

(vi) Confidentiality and dealing with disclosures: Ensuring confidentiality during data collection, analysis and dissemination is a key challenge in sexual violence research. If data protection is breached, this can have serious and far-reaching consequences, not only for those involved and implicated by potential disclosures but also for organisations facilitating the research.

Researchers involved in sexual violence research must be prepared for the potential for participants to make disclosures of experiences of abuse during their work. This requires knowledge, skills and support. In contexts without effective referral pathways in place, both professionals and young researchers may feel overburdened by the responsibility of handling disclosures. Setting up proper referral pathways can be difficult, particularly in international research projects where child protection standards vary across different countries and support and service provision for victims may be limited or not available in some contexts.

(vii) Group dynamics: Due to power differentials within and between groups of participant-researchers and/or participant-researchers and respondents, group dynamics may be complex and need to be carefully managed. Re-defining and adjusting to new power-sharing arrangements between professional and young researchers may require a high degree of flexibility and personal engagement.

(viii) Dissemination: Presenting evidence on sexual violence can pose ethical and legal dilemmas, all of which must be taken into consideration when presenting such data. Researchers and key stakeholders need to work in partnership, build trust, and have open discussions on what can and should be shared within the contexts in which the research is being undertaken. Such discussions need to begin before the research starts and be ongoing throughout the research process.

(ix) Impact: Having open and transparent conversations with all stakeholders about limitations and potential outcomes, and clarifying the level of support that a research project can offer to C&YP at the individual and collective levels (for instance improving access to services), are crucial to manage expectations and promote transparency.

Thinking of ways to promote sustainability and to ensure that participatory initiatives continue to benefit those involved in the research beyond the duration of the project are not always part of research planning. Such considerations are important, however. They can involve (among other things) recognising and documenting C&YP's contributions in ways that are useful for their continued training, education or future employment, and should be appropriate for the context of their lives.

PART 1: THE SCOPING REVIEW

This report presents findings from an international scoping review, undertaken between January and December 2017, on the engagement of children and young people (C&YP) in participatory research on sexual violence. It was commissioned as part of the 'Being Heard' project (see 1.1 below).

The report has three sections:

(i) Section one outlines the rationale, focus, methods used, key concepts and theoretical framework of the scoping review.

(ii) Section two presents the findings from the scoping review. It provides a brief overview of the evidence gathered and explores some of the key rationales for involving C&YP in participatory research on sexual violence. It then explores barriers to undertaking participatory research with C&YP affected by sexual violence. It also presents some examples of strategies identified as useful in addressing some of the challenges discussed.

(iii) Section three draws out key reflections for research in this field.

1.1. The 'Being Heard' project

The 'Being Heard' project is a collaboration between the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) and the International Centre, University of Bedfordshire. Funded by Oak Foundation, the project's goal is to promote the meaningful and ethical involvement of C&YP in participatory research in the field of sexual violence (for more information see the project website: **www.svri.org/what-we-do/capacity-development/projects/being-heard**).

1.1.1 The Sexual Violence Research Initiative

The SVRI is a global research initiative that promotes and supports good quality research in the area of sexual violence in LMIC. It seeks to build an experienced and committed network of researchers, policy makers, activists and donors to ensure that the many aspects of sexual violence are addressed from the perspective of different disciplines and cultures. The SVRI believes that prevention efforts and service provision must be informed by sound research and evidence (for more information, see **www.svri.org**).

1.1.2 The International Centre: Researching child sexual exploitation, violence and trafficking

The IC is a research centre based at the University of Bedfordshire in the UK. It is committed to increasing understanding of, and improving responses to, child sexual exploitation, violence and trafficking, in local, national and international contexts, achieved through:

- academic rigour and research excellence;
- collaborative and partnership-based approaches to applied social research;
- meaningful and ethical engagement of C&YP;
- active dissemination and evidence-based engagement in theory, policy and practice. The International Centre has a focus on C&YP's participation and aims to promote such approaches wherever possible (for more information see **www.beds.ac.uk/intcent**).

1.1.3 The project advisory group

The 'Being Heard' project was supported by a project advisory group (PAG), consisting of ten international experts in one or several of the following the fields: C&YP's participation; children's rights; sexual violence research and/or programming (for more information, see **www.svri.org/what-we-do/capacity-development/projects/being-heard/being-heard-advisory-group**). The role of the PAG was to provide strategic guidance on ethical, safe and meaningful participation of C&YP in research events and activities related to the 'Being Heard' project and to advise on the design and implementation of different aspects and stages of the scoping review. Four PAG meetings were held virtually over the duration of the project to discuss progress of project activities.

1.1.4 Project activities and outputs

The 'Being Heard' project had two main components:

(i) The first project activity, led by the SVRI, consisted of developing a toolkit on ethical and meaningful engagement of C&YP at SVRI Forums. This involved bringing a group of young researchers to the SVRI Forum 2017 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, through a system of bursaries. The young researchers were young people who had been engaged in participatory research in their communities. The purpose of their involvement was to share their experience of participatory research with Forum delegates, participate in the Forum, and work with the SVRI to develop a toolkit to guide the meaningful and ethical engagement of young people at SVRI Forums.

(ii) The second project activity, led by the IC, was to undertake an international scoping review on the engagement of C&YP in participatory research on sexual violence. The evidence gathered as part of the scoping review informs this report.

1.1.5 The rationale for the project

Every two years the SVRI hosts one of the world's largest conferences on sexual and intimate partner violence research – the SVRI Forum (for more information, see: **www.svri.org/svri-forum**).

Over the last decade, the SVRI Forum has seen an increase in the number of presentations on sexual violence affecting children, reflecting the current proliferation in global initiatives focusing on the connections between violence in childhood and later victimisation and perpetration. Involving C&YP in sexual violence research, however, remains a challenging issue for many academic researchers. Extending the role of C&YP beyond that of research subjects remained a notable gap in previous SVRI Forums, as was the absence of C&YP among Forum delegates. This indicates the need for capacity-building work with researchers, programme developers, funding agencies and policy makers on how to involve C&YP in research activities and on the ethics of involving them as participant-researchers.

C&YP's competency and capacity as commentators on their own lives constitutes a unique opportunity to enrich our evidence base. Their voices can, and should, inform thinking on how to address the sexual violence that permeates the daily lives of many C&YP around the world (Know Violence in Childhood, 2017). 'Being Heard' builds on a growing awareness that if the perspectives of C&YP are not included in research, policies and programmes aimed at supporting them, the efforts made by adults to promote developments to enhance their life outcomes will fail (Combe, 2002; Ford, Odallo and Chorlton, 2003; Gaunle and Adhikari, 2010; Hallett and Prout, 2003; Kirk, Mitchell and Reid-Walsh, 2010; MacKinnon and Watling, 2006; Wallerstein and Duran, 2006).

Given the role of research in informing programmes and policy, the way research is conducted and how C&YP's perspectives are included throughout the process are key concerns (Alderson, 2000; Alparone and Rissotto, 2001; Camino and Zeldin, 2002; Cunningham, Jones and Dillon, 2003; Fielding, 2007; Mitchell and Reid-Walsh, 2008). As Liebenberg (2017) noted:

> "When research findings more accurately reflect the priorities of youth, together with their lived realities, the services and policies built on these findings will be better able to support the life outcomes of young people." (p.1)

This is especially significant for C&YP who are in some way marginalised and/or affected by trauma (Absolon and Willett, 2005; Chandler and Lalonde, 2004; Hartt, 2010; Shea et al., 2013).

1.1.6 Rationales for focusing on C&YP affected by sexual violence

The scoping review focuses primarily on C&YP with experience of sexual violence whilst also considering the broader category of C&YP affected by sexual violence. The first category includes children who are victims and/or perpetrators of sexual violence. The second category includes C&YP who may have been indirectly affected by sexual violence, for instance, through witnessing sexual violence or living in environments with high incidents of sexual violence, such as gang-affected neighbourhoods (see Beckett et al., 2013). These C&YP may know or have supported someone close to them with direct experience of sexual violence and may themselves be at elevated risk of experiencing this form of abuse.

The rationale for including the second category stems from a recognition of the 'ripple effects' of sexual violence (Morrison, Quadara and Boyd, 2007; Warrington et al., 2017) and acknowledges the secondary traumatisation that can result from having a family member, friend, and/or partner who has experienced sexual violence.

The two categories can be problematic, not least because they exclude those individuals who have undisclosed experiences of sexual violence and those who do not self-identify as victims of sexual violence because of shame, self-blame, stigma, mental health problems, or due to sexual violence being normalised (Morrison, Bruce and Willson, 2018). Research on children's disclosures of sexual abuse shows that disclosures can take a very long time[1] and, sometimes, sexual abuse will never be disclosed at all (Allnock and Miller, 2013; Stoltenborgh et al., 2011; Ullman, 2003).

SVAC is known to be a serious and widespread problem across the globe (UNICEF, 2017; Know Violence in Childhood, 2017). Evidence from the pan-European 'STIR' (Safeguarding Teenage Intimate Relationships) study highlights that prevalence of interpersonal violence and abuse among young people is pervasive, with between a half and two-thirds of young women and between a third and two-thirds of young men aged 14 to 17 years old from five European countries (England, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Italy and Norway) reporting such forms of violence and abuse (Barter et al., 2015). Data based on national household surveys conducted between 2007 and 2013 in Cambodia, Haiti, Kenya, Malawi, Zimabwe, Swaziland and Tanzania indicate that the lifetime prevalence of experiencing any form of sexual violence in childhood in most of the seven countries studied was greater than 25% (Sumner et al., 2015).[2]

The aim of this scoping review is to explore ways to harness the expertise and specialist knowledge of those C&YP affected by sexual violence, either directly or otherwise. It is hoped that the report provides a starting point for a deeper conversation about what it means to ethically and meaningfully engage C&YP in sexual violence research and why it is important to do so.

1 Allnock and Miller's (2013) UK-based study found that, on average, it takes children 7.8 years to disclose experiences of sexual abuse.

2 In collaboration with local research organisations, 'Together for Girls' conducted national household surveys of children and young people aged 13–24 years to measure the extent of violence against children. The lifetime prevalence of experiencing any form of sexual violence in childhood ranged from 4.4% among females in Cambodia to 37.6% among females in Swaziland. In most countries surveyed, the proportion of victims that received services, including health and child protective services, was ≤10.0%. (Sumner et al., 2015).

1.1.7 Key research questions:

The scoping review explored the following key questions:[3]

- How is participatory research on sexual violence with C&YP conceptualised in the research literature and practice?
- What are the benefits of C&YP's participation in research on sexual violence?
- What are the barriers that hinder participatory involvement of C&YP in research on sexual violence?
- What are the key challenges emerging from child and youth participatory involvement in research on sensitive topics?
- What strategies or approaches have been used to support C&YP's involvement in participatory research in this field?
- What are the training and support needs of researchers and C&YP to enable meaningful and ethical participation?
- What resources would be useful to build capacity, knowledge and skills to facilitate more child/youth participatory research in this field?

1.2. Methods

1.2.1 The rationale for choosing a scoping review

This study is not a systematic literature review, but a multi-method scoping exercise. The importance and role of systematic literature reviews in contributing to a rigorous evidence base is recognised in social research, but this approach can be limiting in exploring newer areas of research where the evidence base is still emerging.

According to Rutter et al. (2010), a scoping review seeks to clarify the nature of research questions, to identify the range of relevant resources and to make a broad assessment of the coherence and quality of knowledge. Given that the scoping review focuses on an area where academic literature is relatively scarce and predominantly originates in HIC (Ellsberg et al., 2014; Know Violence against Children, 2017); and much relevant knowledge resides in practice[4] and may not be documented in a format that meets the criteria for systematic review, adopting a scoping review was an appropriate choice. The decision to adopt a broader search strategy (explained below) to capture materials beyond those published in peer-reviewed journals reflects a growing interest in types of knowledge and a recognition of different approaches applied to the generation of knowledge through literature reviews (Arksey and O'Malley, 2005; Boaz, Ashby and Young, 2002; Brodie et al., 2016).

3 A more comprehensive catalogue of the research questions can be found in the research protocol (Appendix A).

4 A number of different sectors, including (higher) education, government agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are active in engaging C&YP in participatory research on a range of social issues, at local, national and international levels. Sometimes, projects are undertaken in collaboration and may be initiated, funded or commissioned by international agencies, international NGOs, or organisations based in HIC and co-developed and -delivered in cooperation with local or regional partners in LMIC who can provide the necessary local expertise, relevant contacts and infrastructure (Girl Effect, 2017a/b; SANLAAP, 2010; van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan, 2017). Although practice-based participatory research offers important learning, such initiatives, particularly if small-scale and local, are rarely rigorously evaluated or documented in publications, peer-reviewed or otherwise.

1.2.2 Research design

A multi-method research design was created to facilitate data collection, consisting of six distinct yet complimentary parts:

(i) Defining the remit of the scoping review;

(ii) A review of academic literature;

(iii) A review of grey literature;

(iv) A call for evidence;

(v) Key informant interviews; and

(vi) A consultation as part of a pre-conference workshop at the SVRI Forum 2017.

Ethical approval

Ethical approval for the scoping review was sought and granted from the Institute of Applied Social Science's ethics committee at the University of Bedfordshire. Consent forms and information sheets were developed to explain the purpose of the research and how the data would be used (see Appendix F). These documents outlined the project's policies around data protection, confidentiality, anonymisation, and child protection obligations. Informed consent to use data for the scoping review was obtained from all key informants, delegates attending the pre-conference workshop at the SVRI Forum 2017, and individuals and organisations who submitted materials as part of the call for evidence.

Defining the remit of the scoping review

A comprehensive research protocol containing a catalogue of research questions, parameters, inclusion and exclusion criteria and search strategies was established in consultation with the research team and the PAG (see Appendix A). The search protocol was piloted over two weeks in February and March 2017.

In addition, a concept note was developed to clearly define the focus, remit and parameters of the study (see Appendix B).

Academic literature review

The research protocol was piloted[5] on the University of Bedfordshire's online library's 'Discover'[6] search engine and subsequently revised. A degree of flexibility was applied to the searches, allowing modifications of search terms and/or combinations to better adapt to the different databases. Journals and databases that did not generate any relevant results during this search process were excluded from the search.

The search was conducted in two stages. During the first stage, selection criteria were applied to determine relevance, and abstracts were reviewed according to the following line of inquiry:

5 The pilot consisted of conducting between three and 25 trial runs on Discover (see footnote 6). 11 additional databases (Social Care Online; ASSIA; SocINDEX; Sage Premier; Google scholar; British Library EthOS; Cochrane Library; Campbell Collection; PsycARTICLES; PsycINFO; PubMed) were searched individually. The searches were conducted using different search terms and/or search term combinations, modifying and refining these to achieve relevant results. Each trial was accompanied by a thorough hand-search of the first 300 articles.

6 Discover is a 'single search solution' that allows users to conduct searches of most of the University's catalogue and electronic resources simultaneously.

- Is the article about participatory involvement of service users from vulnerable groups in research?
- Does the article discuss relevant ethical or methodological issues that can offer learning that is applicable to the sexual violence context?
- Are there relevant lessons from this article that can be transferred to the context of involving C&YP in sexual violence research?

Articles were then included or excluded based on a review of abstracts or tables of content (in the case of longer reports or books). Results that met some but not all of the above-mentioned criteria were retained to be considered in the second selection process. Sporadic quality checks were conducted by two peer researchers to determine whether criteria were applied with consistency. This first stage included 304 sources.

The second selection process consisted of reviewing the articles selected during the first stage and coding them according to the categories listed below. Reasons for including or excluding each source and the category codings were then discussed and reviewed. In the event of diverging opinions, reviewers discussed these differences to reach a mutual decision. After the second stage, 76 sources remained (see Appendix C).

The scoping review, coding and selection process were undertaken by two independent reviewers to ensure consistency and reduce bias. A coding system, consisting of five categories, was established to ensure systematic weighting of the evidence. Articles were rated according to key themes and relevance, in order of priority:

Category 1: Literature on participatory research methods, C&YP and sexual violence (or other relevant marginalised groups/issues, e.g. participatory research with adults on sexual violence OR participatory research with marginalised C&YP, such as street-connected youth);

Category 2: Literature on participatory research methods and C&YP;

Category 3: Literature on (non-participatory) research methods with C&YP on sexual violence and broader abuse issues;

Category 4: Background reading relevant to broader concepts, focusing on participation and definitions of participation or participatory research; and

Category 5: Literature with transferable conceptual or ethical issues from different contexts (for example, health research involving children or vulnerable groups).

Grey literature review

A grey literature search was conducted alongside the academic literature review to identify learning from participatory research projects and to capture examples from practice. This consisted of hand-searching organisational websites and databases of relevant non-governmental organisations (NGOs); international NGOs; UN agencies; research/academic institutions; national, regional and international practice, policy and research networks, including Childhub, Participatory Methods, Save the Children, the Child Rights International Network (CRIN), Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC), the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), and the UK's National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children's (NSPCC) 'Inform' library. The search identified 42 relevant resources that were included in the review (see Appendix D); of these, two were sourced through Childhub and 39 were found on the Participatory Methods website (**www.participatorymethods.org**).

Call for evidence

A call for evidence was launched to complement the academic and grey literature searches (see Appendix E). This was distributed widely through associated national, regional and international networks, including SVRI, the RISE Network, Childhub and the 'Our Voices' Research and Practice network, requesting relevant materials to be submitted and for the call for evidence to be re-posted to achieve wider circulation. The call generated 56 submissions; 20 of these were included in the review.

Key informant interviews

Ten key informants were interviewed on specific participatory research initiatives on sexual violence and related areas. In semi-structured interviews, they were asked to elaborate in depth on the benefits and challenges they encountered, and to identify strategies they had employed to address these (see interview topic guide in Appendix G). If not stated explicitly as a source, data emerging from these interviews are referenced in the scoping review as ('Int.'). All data were anonymised to ensure confidentiality and minimise the likelihood of being able to attribute contributions to individual informants.

Key informants were selected based on being associated with a particularly relevant project identified as part of the scoping exercise. They were selected in consultation with the PAG, with specific consideration of closing evidence gaps, for instance relating to geographic representation, emerging from the academic literature review.

Young key informants: Three of the key informants were young women between the ages of 20 and 24, representing Western Europe, Latin America and Africa. In addition to studying at university, these key informants had been involved in a range of participatory research initiatives facilitated either by NGOs or academic institutions.

Adult key informants: Seven of the key informants were adult professionals; three males and four females. They had been identified as experts in C&YP's participation with experience of facilitating participatory research with marginalised or vulnerable C&YP. Representing a range of professional sectors, five informants were based at NGOs, one was based at a research institute and one was a university-based academic researcher. In terms of geographic representation, three of the seven were based in the UK but had substantial experience of facilitating participatory research with C&YP in LMIC (mostly Africa and Asia); the remaining four were based in Africa (two in Uganda, one in Tanzania and one in Nigeria).

TABLE 1: Key informants (anonymised)

KEY INFORMANTS				REFERENCED AS
Gender	**Adult/YP**	**Sector**	**Region(s) of professional activity**	
Female	Adult	NGO	Africa	**Int. 1**
Female	Adult	NGO	Global	**Int. 2**
Male	Adult	NGO	Africa	**Int. 3**
Female	Young person	NGO & university student	Latin America	**Int. 4**
Female	Young person	NGO & university student	Africa	**Int. 5**
Male	Adult	NGO	Africa	**Int. 6**
Female	Adult	University	UK & Africa	**Int. 7**
Male	Adult	NGO	Africa	**Int. 8**
Female	Young person	Young researcher and student at university	UK	**Int. 9**
Female	Adult	Associated with university	Global	**Int. 10**

Workshop consultation

A pre-conference workshop was run with 37 international delegates at the SVRI Forum 2017 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The aim of the workshop was to gather data on the training needs of researchers who are interested in, or already using, participatory approaches to researching child sexual violence. In addition to testing emerging findings from the scoping review and identifying gaps in current knowledge, workshop activities explored the values and challenges of and barriers to involving C&YP in research in this field.

The workshop also elicited feedback on what types of information and range and format of resources might be useful to facilitate more participatory research on sexual violence. The data emerging from the workshop were anonymised so that they cannot be attributed to individual delegates and to ensure data protection. The information elicited through the workshop informs the scoping review and is integrated into the findings section of this report. If not stated explicitly as a source, data emerging from the workshop consultation are referenced in the scoping review as ('WS').

1.2.3 Limitations

Several limitations arise from the chosen methods. As noted above, the scoping review was not a systematic literature review and therefore does not claim to be exhaustive. Furthermore, there are some limitations in relation to the geographic reach and regional representation arising from the chosen remit and methods. The time and resources allocated to this project allowed a review of materials that were accessible in English. This resulted in gaps in the data generated in relation to specific regions, most notably Eastern Europe, parts of Asia (particularly North and South East Asia) and Latin America and the Caribbean. Efforts were made to address these gaps by targeting individuals and networks in under-represented regions and re-circulating the call for evidence with an invitation to submit non-English resources. A small literature search was undertaken in French, Spanish and Portuguese; however, none of the materials generated by searches focusing on non-English materials met the inclusion criteria. Consequently, the geographic and linguistic focus of the scoping remains Anglo-centric. Due to these limitations, the scoping review is more accurately described as 'international', rather than 'global'.

Other limitations reflect existing gaps in the evidence bases that underpin this scoping review. Much of what is known about SVAC originates from HIC (Know Violence in Childhood, 2017). Similarly, much of what has been published on C&YP's involvement in participatory research on sensitive issues appears to emerge from HIC, and, as BabyLaw Okoli (2015) notes, uses 'Western' models and ethical frameworks for conducting research with C&YP.

Given the existing limitations in relation to the available evidence base, the authors acknowledge the dangers of reproducing a geographic bias in this report, despite attempting to address this issue. A series of concerted efforts have been made to locate relevant research initiatives in LMIC through the grey literature searches. In consultation with the PAG, the call for evidence was recirculated through established networks, including the RISE network, to increase its geographic reach in Africa, Asia and the Latin American region. In addition, much of the learning that was elicited through key informant interviews and the pre-conference workshop drew from initiatives in LMIC.

Reflecting gaps in the available data, the scoping review was, unable to systematically aggregate data according to gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, faith background, socio-economic status, disability/ies and other factors which shape C&YP's lives. The authors recognise this as a significant shortcoming. Further research is needed on the implications of diversity for children's ability to participate in research and/or researchers' abilities to involve children; on C&YP's and researchers' individual training and support needs; and on the specific benefits of involving particularly vulnerable or marginalised groups in such initiatives.

1.3 Defining key concepts

1.3.1 Sexual violence against children

SVAC is recognised as a serious violation of children's human rights. Relevant international legal frameworks include the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989); and at European level, the 2011 Council of Europe (CoE) Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (the 'Istanbul Convention') (CoE, 2011); and the 2007 CoE Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (the 'Lanzarote Convention') (CoE, 2007).[7]

In practice, definitions of SVAC vary just as norms differ across national and socio-cultural contexts (Cloward, 2016). Similarly, the concept of SVAC varies according to whether it is understood as a legal, medical or sociological issue (Save the Children, n.d.). 'SVAC' is used in this report as an umbrella term, connoting the diversity of meanings ascribed to it in different contexts and research projects.

UNICEF explains SVAC by noting that it:

> "...can take the form of sexual abuse, harassment, rape or sexual exploitation in prostitution or pornography. It can happen in homes, institutions, schools, workplaces, in travel and tourism facilities, within communities – both in development and emergency contexts...as well as in non-emergency contexts in developed countries. Increasingly, the internet and mobile phones also put children at risk of sexual violence as some adults look to the internet to pursue sexual relationships with children." (UNICEF, 2017, p.1)

In recent years, 'peer on peer' violence, including sexualised forms of abuse and bullying perpetrated against C&YP by their peers, has gained increasing recognition (Barter and Berridge, 2011; Finkelhor and Jenkins Tucker, 2015; Firmin, 2015). An in-depth exploration of 'peer on peer' abuse is outside the remit of this scoping review; however, it is important to note that the types and forms of SVAC discussed here include those perpetrated by adults as well as by other children.

There is a growing evidence base focusing on virtual forms of abuse, including sexual abuse (UNICEF, 2017). It is also recognised that forms of SVAC, whether perpetrated by peers or adults, extend beyond the physical world into virtual realms and that online and offline abuse can be interlinked (Burton et al., 2016; Davidson et al., 2012; Hamm et al., 2015; Smeaton, 2013).

SVAC is pervasive and underreported

SVAC is a global reality across all countries and social groups (UNICEF, 2017; Know Violence in Childhood, 2017).[8] Reliable data on SVAC, as on violence against children more broadly, are difficult to obtain, partly because such violence frequently takes place within interpersonal relationships and is hidden by cultures of silence (Know Violence in Childhood, 2017). Sexual violence is reasonably believed to be underreported with the reported scale of the problem likely only to portray the 'tip of the iceberg'. Global evidence reveals that the self-reported prevalence of child sexual abuse victimisation is more than 30 times higher than official reports (Stoltenborgh et al., 2011).[9]

7 The CRC does not define 'sexual violence', though it includes (child) 'sexual abuse' (CSA) in its definition of 'violence' in Article 19 and specifically addresses protection from (child) 'sexual exploitation' as a form of CSA in Article 34.

8 For more detailed information about prevalence, see the 'Ending Violence in Childhood: Global Report 2017' (Know Violence in Childhood, 2017).

9 A comprehensive meta-analysis by Stoltenborgh et al. (2011) combining prevalence figures of CSA estimates that, overall, prevalence of childhood sexual abuse was 127/1000 in self-report studies and 4/1000 in informant studies, with self-reported CSA being significantly more common among female (180/1000) than male (76/1000) participants. Lowest rates for both girls (113/1000) and boys (41/1000) were found in Asia, and highest rates were found for girls in Australia (215/1000) and for boys in Africa (193/1000). The results of this meta-analysis confirm that CSA is a global problem of considerable extent, but also show that methodological issues drastically influence the self-reported prevalence of CSA.

1.3.2 C&YP's involvement in participatory research

It is important to provide a clear definition of what is understood as 'participatory research', and C&YP's involvement in it, given the broad range of activities that are described as 'participatory'. To this end, a concept note has been developed, outlining the focus and parameters of this study (see Appendix B). The report limits itself to briefly discussing the key principles and models in relation to C&YP's involvement in participatory research that are used throughout this scoping review.

'Participatory research' can be broadly defined as:

> "A range of methodological approaches and techniques, all with the objective of handing power from the researcher to research participants... Participatory research involves inquiry, but also action." (Participate, n.d.)

As the quote above highlights, alongside the concern with power, much, though not all, participatory research has a focus on (social) action and retains a strong commitment to influencing or delivering tangible benefits and changes for those involved – either as individuals or communities. In pursuing these aims, collaboration and dialogue between stakeholders, such as between researchers, service users, communities, policy makers and/or practitioners, tend to underpin participatory research processes.

As with action research, the distinction between research and social change can be blurred as the process of developing new knowledge becomes integrated with responses to the issues under exploration (Banks, Herrington and Carter, 2017). Social action may include the capacity building inherent in these processes, campaigning work and/or influencing and changing practice. As Williams and Brydon-Miller note (2004), participatory action research:

> "...combines aspects of popular education, community-based research, and action for social change. Emphasizing collaboration within marginalized or oppressed communities, participatory action research works to address the underlying causes of inequality while at the same time focusing on finding solutions to specific community concerns." (p. 245)

An associated benefit inherent in participatory research practice relates to the creation of opportunities for those who are typically the 'subjects' of research to 'self-represent' themselves, their concerns, or their communities directly, rather than relying on representation by others. This marks a critical shift in traditional research relationships and specifically addresses concerns about power relations associated with the means of representation (Castells, 2000 [1996]; Foucault, 1980). It also aligns with traditions in feminist and narrative research which value multiple subjectivities as opposed to searching for objective 'truths' in research (Plummer, 1995). Alongside other (mainly qualitative) approaches to research, participatory research challenges positivist conceptualisations of 'knowledge', raising epistemological and methodological questions in relation to what constitutes 'evidence' and who is involved in producing it (Bovarnick with D'Arcy, 2018).

To summarise, though used variably in different contexts, 'participatory research' can be understood to incorporate some shared principles and assumptions. For the purposes of this scoping review, four key characteristics have been identified:

- a commitment to redressing existing power imbalances in research;
- a concern with social action (e.g. improved services or responses);
- a focus on collaboration among stakeholders – and particularly those usually marginalised from such processes;
- a subsequent increase in opportunities for research respondents to self-represent.

1.3.3 Models of participation

C&YP's involvement within participatory research processes can occur in different aspects of the research project and afford C&YP different degrees of influence. One useful model to characterise this variation is the three-tier typology of consultative, collaborative and participant-led practice developed by Lansdown and presented in Lansdown and O'Kane's children's participation evaluation toolkit.

FIGURE 1: Models of Participation

(Lansdown and O'Kane, 2015)

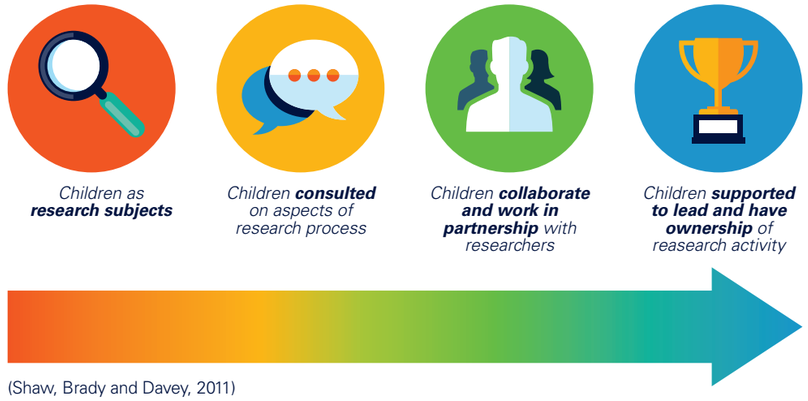
'Consultative' refers to initiatives that elicit C&YP's perspectives and offer them opportunities for influence, e.g. by informing services or decisions affecting them.

'Collaborative' is defined as adults working in varying degrees of partnership with C&YP. Collaborative initiatives create opportunities for C&YP to actively influence the design and processes of projects and to share decision-making. Projects generally remain adult-initiated, although their inception and development may be informed by C&YP.

'Child/youth-led' projects are those that are initiated and led by C&YP. They rely on opportunities and resources to enable C&YP to initiate and run their own activities. Processes are owned and led by C&YP, and adults may be invited to facilitate, provide resources, funding or guidance and to support them with aspects of their work. (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2015)

Shaw, Brady and Davey (2011) have applied the different levels of C&YP's participation to research:

FIGURE 2: The continuum of children's participation in research



(Shaw, Brady and Davey, 2011)

Leading theorists on children's participation (Hart 2008; Lansdown, 2011) note that when using such models (in research or practice) the different levels of participation should be viewed as a continuum, rather than a hierarchy, and that the nature of children's influence in participatory activities can frequently fluctuate, overlap or encompass different levels simultaneously, even within a single research project. Similarly, different levels of participation are possible or appropriate at different times, depending on the capacity, interests, and circumstances of individuals; funders' requirements; and resources available.

Shortcomings and critiques of participation

Despite offering a range of benefits, participatory research has been critiqued for several shortcomings. A key concern relates to a dissonance between the rhetoric of participation and its 'sometimes glossy (or glossed-over) presentation' (Pain, 2004). Full collaborative practice and power sharing remain rare (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). Such critiques (Ibid.; Cornwall, 2004; Gaventa, 2003) emphasise a need to analyse relationships of 'power' in research within a wider framework of contextual influences, existing inequities, and ongoing exclusion. They note that there is often limited evidence of genuine empowerment in many initiatives purporting to be participatory (Gaventa, 2003). This is not to fault research or practice for falling short of aspirations to be fully participatory, but rather to encourage practitioners and academics to reflect honestly and transparently on where meaningful influence is enabled among those involved and the limitations involved.

Cornwall (2004) highlights the critical distinction between participation in 'invited spaces', where individuals are 'invited into' existing structures; and situations in which marginalised individuals claim, inhabit or forge decision-making spaces of their own choosing (p. 78). This is highly relevant to a consideration of participatory research with C&YP. It suggests a need to review and analyse projects according to management and funding arrangements and to consider how and where the impetus for research originates.

Additional concerns relate to diversity and exclusion within groups of C&YP. A concern with the power differentials between C&YP and adults can often mask the diversity within groups or communities of C&YP themselves, or even the forms of adversity that C&YP share with adults. As Hinton (2008) notes, diversity among children and adults is often submerged and questions about who is excluded from participatory processes and on what grounds remain unquestioned. In this way, participatory practice often fails to consider barriers to participation and the unequal distribution of power that the label 'participation' can itself obscure. This is particularly important given the documented tendency of participatory initiatives to involve more compliant children (Hart, 2009; Morrow, 2001).

Finally, several writers also draw attention to the risk of 'tokenism'. Hinton (2008) argues that children's participation can potentially be used as a domesticating or governing strategy. This aligns with arguments about the potential for marginalised groups' or service users' involvement to be 'co-opted' to serve professional or organisational agendas – consciously or otherwise (Carr, 2004; Adams, 2008). Furthermore, Braye and Preston-Shoot (2003) note how activities (including research) labelled 'empowering' can often work to conceal existing inequities and structures of power. As both Morrow (2001) and Cotmore (2004) have argued, participatory processes may involve both empowerment and co-option at the same time.

1.4 Theoretical framework

To a large extent, both the rationales for and the barriers to C&YP's engagement in sexual violence research are borne out of inherent tensions between children's rights to participation and protection enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (Archard, 2004; Healy, 1998; Healy and Darlington, 2009; Hinton, 2008). It is therefore useful to explore some of the relevant key debates arising from a rights-based framework that underpin this scoping review.

1.4.1 Tensions between children's participation and protection: vulnerability and resilience

Historically, children's rights narratives have placed paramount emphasis on children's needs for protection from violence and abuse. This is partly due to children's specific and additional vulnerabilities in relation to violence and abuse that arise out of conditions of their dependency. It also partly responds to evidence that shows the potentially long-term and wide-ranging detrimental impact of experiencing different forms of maltreatment, including sexual violence, during the sensitive and formative years of childhood (Felitti et al., 1998; Felitti and Anda, 2009; Finkelhor, 2007; Finkelhor and Jenkins Tucker, 2015; Fisher et al., 2017; Turner et al., 2015).

Recognising children's specific vulnerabilities has been significant in helping to afford them a special status of protection. At the same time, it has arguably diverted attention away from children's 'agency', i.e. their ability to make choices and decisions, to influence events and to have an impact on their world (ACECQA, n. d.; Jago et al., 2011). As a result, children who are considered 'vulnerable' are typically side-lined from participatory initiatives and decision making about their own needs and futures or discussions about how to help others (Cody, 2017; Warrington, 2016; Warrington et al., 2017).

While the CRC enshrines 'the indivisibility of rights' and highlights their interdependency, a pragmatic approach which prioritises children's protection rights above those of participation is often adopted in practice (Feinstein and O'Kane, 2008). This 'hierarchy of rights' is particularly pronounced in the area of sexual violence, where notions of 'victimhood' and 'vulnerability' have often been linked conceptually.

Individuals react differently to adversity (Center on the Developing Child, 2007); C&YP who have been affected by sexual violence may or may not present with a range of trauma-related symptoms, reflecting a wide spectrum of vulnerability and resilience factors that can exacerbate or mitigate against the harmful effects of sexualised trauma (Walsh, Fortier & DeLillo, 2010).

Evidence from research shows, however, that both vulnerability and resilience are multifactorial; not static but fluid; existing along a continuum; and interrelated (Allagia et al., 2016; Anthony and Cohler, 1987). It could be argued that considering adverse childhood experience exclusively in the context of 'vulnerability' diverts attention away from C&YP's inherent capabilities (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014). It overshadows measures that can boost these, and the crucial role they play in building resilience to cope with adversity (Bagattini and Gutwald, 2016; Coleman and Hagell, 2007; Logan-Greene et al., 2014; Soleimanpour, Geierstanger and Brindis, 2017).

1.4.2 Maximising benefits alongside minimising harm

C&YP affected by sexual violence may not see themselves or be perceived by others as 'vulnerable' (Brown, 2006), but it is important to recognise that they may present with high levels of complex needs. This has implications for participatory research and means that C&YP may, at some point, require advocacy and support within and potentially beyond the remit of a participatory (research) project. Professional researchers and other adults must take extremely seriously the vulnerabilities of C&YP who have suffered significant trauma. These must be central in thinking about whether and how an individual can be engaged in participatory research safely. This may mean that for some individuals, involvement in particular research projects is neither desired nor ethically appropriate. Any risks of re-traumatisation must be taken extremely seriously, and the impact of sexualised trauma and its consequences considered carefully by informed professionals.

This may explain why engaging vulnerable groups in participatory research on highly sensitive and stigmatised social issues appears to be rare. The dearth of academic literature suggests that there is a tendency amongst academic researchers to shy away from the associated risks. Given that risks cannot be eliminated, Warrington (2016) argues that we should consider

> "...working with and managing risk as opposed to adopting more risk averse approaches" (p.3).

An experience of sexual violence should not automatically preclude a child or young person's involvement in participatory research opportunities (Mudaly and Goddard, 2009). Similarly, when weighing up the risks of children's participation in research, consideration should also be given to the potential benefits of their involvement and the risks of non-involvement.

Side-lining C&YP who have been affected by sexual violence from research minimises their influence in practice and policy developments. It undermines their chance to inform the evidence base and to represent their perspectives (and those of their peers and communities) to wider audiences. It is therefore important also to consider the ethical implications of excluding them. The guiding principle is to

> "...maximise benefit for individuals and society as well as minimise risk and harm" (ESRC, 2017; Graham et al., 2013).

PART 2:
FINDINGS

The second part of the report presents the findings that have emerged from the scoping review.

It has four sections: The first section provides an overview of the evidence reviewed. The second section presents the rationale for involving C&YP in participatory research on sexual violence and elaborates on some of the documented benefits of participatory approaches. The third section focuses on barriers to initiating participatory research with C&YP affected by sexual violence. And the final section highlights some of the complexities of participatory research processes engaging vulnerable groups, exploring ethical and practical challenges that can be encountered in practice.

Where possible, it includes potential strategies which have been identified as useful in addressing some of the challenges and includes signposts to relevant resources. Some of these are illustrated through examples.

2.1. Overview of resources reviewed

The scoping review identified a range of ways in which C&YP are involved in participatory research on sensitive topics. In keeping with the continuum of children's participation (Figures 1 & 2), research activities reviewed ranged from consultative to collaborative to child/youth-led research activities. The distinctions between these three categories are largely conceptual as projects often used different types of participatory practice at different stages of the research. Despite this, it is worth noting that the scoping review identified far fewer research activities that could be categorised as collaborative and youth-led than consultative (see table below).

TABLE 2: Breakdown of participatory research initiatives identified in the scoping review

TYPE OF PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH PROJECT	NUMBER OF SOURCES REVIEWED IN FINAL SELECTION
Child-led	4
Collaborative	47
Consultative	53
Participatory monitoring and evaluation of youth services	3
Participatory action research projects with young people	5
Total	**112**

2.1.1 Opportunities and benefits of involving C&YP in participatory research

The identified participatory research initiatives are broadly categorised here according to the contributions that C&YP have made to different aspects of them. The table below shows opportunities for involvement and the perceived value of C&YP's contributions. It is divided according to different stages in the participatory research process, for the purposes of clarity. It acknowledges that these processes may vary and that there is often significant overlap between the different stages.

TABLE 3: Documented opportunities and benefits associated with C&YP's involvement in participatory research[10]

STAGE IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH PROCESS	NO. OF IDENTIFIED STUDIES INVOLVING C&YP	IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITIES FOR C&YP'S INVOLVEMENT IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH	PERCEIVED BENEFITS/ IDENTIFIED VALUE OF ENGAGING C&YP IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH
Research design	18	■ Defining research focus/agenda. ■ Adapting research questions or formulating new ones. ■ Piloting research design. ■ Contributing to funding bids	■ Identifying/prioritising the most pertinent issues affecting C&YP. ■ Formulating research questions in age/context-appropriate language. ■ Ensuring methods are youth-friendly, engaging, and age-appropriate.
Example sources: Addy, 2015; Åkerström and Brunnberg, 2013; Braye and McDonnell, 2013; Challenging Heights, 2013; Dentith, Measor and O'Malley, 2009; Flicker, 2008; Graça, Gonçalves and Martins, 2017; Holland et al., 2010; Houghton, 2015; Kirby, 2004; Lushey and Munro, 2015; McLean and Modi, 2016; Ngutuku and Okwany, 2017; Porter, 2016; SANLAAP, 2010; Save the Children, 2003; Smith, Monaghan and Broad, 2002; West, 1999; YPP Youth from Maiti Nepal, 2010			
Ethics	9	■ Co-developing risk and needs assessments. ■ Contributing to risk management; e.g. by developing group working agreements. ■ Ensuring that materials (e.g. consent forms, project information leaflets) are accessible to child/ youth respondents.	■ Facilitating buy-in, raising risk-awareness, promoting responsibility and ownership. ■ Assisting in meaningfully gaining informed consent from research respondents.
Example sources: Aparajeyo-Bangladesh, 2010; Bradbury-Jones, 2014; Flicker, 2008; Houghton, 2015; Girl Effect 2017a; Lushey and Munro, 2015; Porter, 2016; SANLAAP, 2010; Warrington et al., 2017; YPP Youth from Maiti Nepal, 2010			
Research governance/ management	10	■ Serving as a member of Project Advisory Boards, advising on research process and content, including ethical, methodological and logistical issues and dissemination. ■ Providing guidance on research management, including monitoring and evaluation.	■ Ensuring that research projects incorporate a child's/young person's perspective throughout the process. ■ Supporting accountability to key stakeholders. ■ Enhancing research governance and ethics. ■ Strengthening project monitoring and evaluations.
Example sources: Braye and McDonnell 2013; Beckett et al., 2013; Beckett and Warrington, 2015; Brown, 2006; Busza 2004; Cossar et al., 2013; Houghton, 2015; Graça, Gonçalves and Martins, 2017; Warrington et al., 2017			
Recruitment and engagement	12	■ Assisting in identifying marginalised communities/ individuals. ■ Identifying 'spaces and places' of target population.	■ Facilitating recruitment of participants/respondents. ■ Helping gain access to locations where target groups gather (may be particularly relevant for ethnographic research). ■ Facilitating reach and rapport; young researchers may be perceived to be on a more equal footing and more approachable.
Example sources: Addy, 2015; Bradbury-Jones, 2014; Dentith, Measor and O'Malley, 2009; Flicker, 2008; Girl Effect, 2017a; Kaime-Atterhög and Ahlberg, 2008; McCleary-Sills et al., 2011; McLean and Modi, 2016; Ngutuku and Okwany, 2017; Porter, 2016; SANLAAP, 2010, van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan, 2017			

10 This table combines data from child-led and collaborative research projects involving young researchers in all or various stages of the research process, as well as some consultative research projects in which young people were involved in dissemination and/or developing recommendations for policy and practice.

Data collection	25	■ Conducting interviews, surveys, undertaking ethnographic research or using a range of other (e.g. creative or visual) methods.	■ Reducing power imbalances between researchers and researched. ■ Building rapport by having the same frame of reference as respondents. ■ Increasing respondents' sense of safety and comfort.

Example sources: Addy, 2015; Bradbury-Jones, 2014; Braye and McDonnell, 2013; Challenging Heights, 2013; Chappell et al., 2014; Coser et al., 2014; Dentith, Measor and O'Malley, 2009; Fleming, 2011; Flicker, 2008; Girl Effect, 2017a; Holland et al., 2010; Houghton, 2015; Kirby, 2004; Lushey and Munro, 2015; McLean and Modi, 2016; Ngutuku and Okwany, 2017; Porter, 2016; SANLAAP, 2010; Save the Children, 2004; Smith, Monaghan and Broad, 2002; van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan, 2017; West, 1999; YPP Youth from Maiti Nepal, 2010

Analysis	21	■ Interpreting data. ■ Sense-checking/making; i.e. deriving meaning from information collected and/or critically reviewing the research findings through a young person's lens. This can include verifying terms and expressions commonly used by C&YP and making sure meanings are conveyed correctly in accordance with the specific contexts in which information was relayed. ■ Prioritising research findings.	■ Enhancing the accuracy and credibility of research findings and helping to reduce the risk of misinterpreting C&YP's statements in research. This can help to validate messages from research. ■ Prioritising and nuancing emerging findings. ■ Identifying the most important findings from a child's/young person's perspective, thereby ensuring that findings are relevant to C&YP.

Example sources: Addy, 2015; Beckett et al., 2013; Beckett and Warrington, 2015; Bradbury-Jones, 2014; Braye and McDonnell, 2013; Challenging Heights, 2013; Chappell et al., 2014; Cossar et al., 2013; Coser et al., 2014; Fleming, 2011; Flicker, 2008; Girl Effect, 2017a; Graça, Gonçalves and Martins, 2017; Holland et al., 2010; Houghton, 2015; Lushey and Munro, 2015; McLean and Modi, 2016; Ngutuku and Okwany, 2017; Porter, 2016; SANLAAP, 2010; Smith et al., 2002; van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan, 2017; Warrington et al., 2017; West, 1999; YPP Youth from Maiti Nepal, 2010

Dissemination	24	■ Facilitating workshops. ■ Creating accessible research outputs to share messages to younger/lay audiences (e.g. reports; films; leaflets; briefings). ■ Engaging in dissemination events (e.g. public/community meetings; conferences, policy forums at regional, national or international levels). ■ Developing messages for action. ■ Supporting youth campaigns and participatory advocacy.	■ Informing more child-centred policy and practice responses. ■ Promoting C&YP's participation. ■ Helping to position and recognise C&YP as active agents for change. ■ Adding authenticity and credibility to research findings. ■ Improving accessibility and acceptability of research findings to C&YP. ■ May improve reach/take-up of research findings amongst peers. ■ Presenting C&YP as competent and capable researchers. ■ May strengthen impact with some stakeholders.

Example sources: Addy, 2015; Amsden and Van Wynsberghe, 2005; Aparajeyo-Bangladesh, 2010; Blanchet-Cohen, 2014; Boyden and Ennew, 1997; Bradbury-Jones, 2014; Brown, 2006; Challenging Heights, 2013; Chappell et al., 2014; Coser et al., 2014; Caudill and Temple, 2001; Eckstein and Pinto, 2013; Fleming, 2011; Flicker, 2008; Graça, Gonçalves and Martins, 2017; Girl Effect, 2017a; Hagell, 2013; Holland et al., 2010; Houghton, 2015; Kirby, 2004; Lowes and Hulatt, 2013; Lushey and Munro, 2015; MacDonald et al., 2011; McLean and Modi, 2016; McCleary-Sills et al., 2011; Ngutuku and Okwany, 2017; Plan, 2009; Porter, 2016; Ruiz-Casares et al. 2013; SANLAAP, 2010; Smith, Monaghan and Broad, 2002; Stuart, Maynard and Rouncefield, 2015; Tutty, 2014; van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan, 2017; West, 1999; YPP Youth from Maiti Nepal, 2010

2.2. Rationales for C&YP's involvement in sexual violence research

The benefits outlined in Table 3 present a rationale for considering and supporting participatory research processes in the field of sexual violence. It responds to a challenge identified during the pre-conference workshop at the SVRI Forum 2017 to better understand and demonstrate the values of participatory approaches. Delegates emphasised that, without this, it may be difficult to 'sell' child/youth participatory research to funders (WS).

Responding to this need, the following section elaborates on the documented benefits of involving C&YP in sexual violence research, to the research community and to the individuals involved and their communities. For the purposes of clarity, benefits of participatory research have been categorised as follows:

> (i) enhancing the evidence base: improving the quality of data and relevance of research messages;
>
> (ii) strengthening dissemination;
>
> (iii) enhancing outcomes for individuals and communities; and
>
> (iv) challenging sexual violence.

It is worth noting that the above categorisation is artificial as the benefits discussed here often overlap in practice. As such, they are rarely bounded by distinct categories but rather are interlinked and mutually dependent: for example, an improved evidence base may lead to better policy and practice responses, which in turn may lead to better outcomes for C&YP affected by sexual violence.

2.2.1 Participatory research can enhance the evidence base

A recurring theme from the sources studied was that C&YP's involvement in sexual violence research could strengthen and refine the evidence base. Central to this argument is a recognition of C&YP's unique insights into their own and their peers' circumstances and the need to access these perspectives directly. As one key informant stated:

> "...we are getting information from the horse's mouth"[11] (Int.1).

Additionally, while C&YP's contributions can enhance understanding of the topic, it is also a means of demonstrating their capacity to act as competent commentators on their lives. This can enrich the evidence base in various ways. Findings from UK-based research projects on CSE identified that C&YP's participatory involvement has resulted in research evidence that both supports the existing evidence base, and adds nuance, additional detail or reprioritises key messages (Beckett and Warrington, 2015; Beckett et al., 2013; Cody, 2017; Warrington et al., 2017). For example, a participatory research project exploring C&YP's experiences of criminal justice responses supported existing evidence about the lack of sensitivity by professionals, but also identified new findings about C&YP's experiences of investigations and court processes (Beckett and Warrington, 2015).

11 English colloquialism for getting information from a direct or first-hand source.

Access to respondents

A growing body of academic and grey literature supports the view that participatory approaches can be helpful in identifying or accessing groups that researchers have typically struggled to engage with (see Table 3 for a full list of references). Power imbalances between researchers and research subjects can create barriers to engaging marginalised groups in research. According to Graça, Gonçalves and Martins (2017), such barriers can arise from a researcher's affiliation with a university or other aspects of the researcher's biography that identify them as 'privileged' or more powerful in relation to those with whom the researcher seeks to engage. The literature discusses a range of related challenges in accessing populations who are highly 'stigmatised' and who can understandably be suspicious of academic researchers who express an interest in them, including resulting from previous negative experience with research (Ibid.; Houghton, 2015).

There is some evidence to suggest that participatory approaches can help to address these barriers by helping to redress power differentials in traditional research relationships (Martin, 2013; Bradbury-Jones, 2014; Flicker, 2008). In a collaborative participatory study examining the vulnerabilities of C&YP living in so-called 'red light districts' (where sex is for sale) in Kolkata, India, the participatory research design harnessed the expertise, proximity and access to peer groups of young researchers (SANLAAP, 2010). Most of the young researchers involved lived in the red light areas themselves and were trained as peer researchers, surveyors and primary data collectors. They identified other C&YP living in vulnerable situations for recruitment as respondents. Similarly, a youth-led research project investigating urban crime and youth employment in slum areas in Kampala, Uganda, documented by Addy (2015), highlights that young researchers added unique value by means of their in-depth understanding of the complexity of their local communities. They were able to recruit respondents; acted as translators; identified high-risk and unsafe areas; and even negotiated access to slum areas with local gatekeepers, allowing research activities to proceed (Ibid.).

The familiarity of participant-researchers with research contexts and respondents, however can also be 'used' by stakeholders. If the ethos of power sharing and the principles of participation (as outlined in Part 1) are not well understood, the specific dynamics of participatory research can easily turn exploitative, rather than being an 'empowering' experience for young people.

Access to data

Participatory methods can potentially establish more equal ground between those undertaking the research and those being researched. For instance, engaging peer researchers can change the nature and dynamic of interaction and facilitate trust (Chappell et al., 2004). Peer research[12] typically involves members of the research target group assuming the role of active researchers who undertake data collection activities (O'Keeffe, 2005).

12 Peer research is but one approach that can be used in participatory research. It should not be presumed to necessarily be developed through participatory principles, however. Rooted in the traditions of participatory, action and 'empowerment' research, peer research methods, like other participatory approaches, assume that peers are 'experts' within their field of experience (O'Keeffe, 2005).

Collaborative research with young peer researchers in Ghana, Malawi and South Africa documented by Porter (2016) suggests that their position as friends, relations or neighbours was conducive in establishing trust and dialogue between peer researchers and community respondents, facilitating the gathering of highly sensitive information. This corresponds to international evidence from both academic and grey literature which indicates that young researchers may enhance data collection by establishing rapport more easily with their peers than adult researchers can (Addy, 2015; Aparajeyo-Bangladesh, 2010; Coser et al., 2014; Girl Effect, 2017a; SANLAAP, 2010; van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan, 2017; YPP Youth from Maiti Nepal, 2010). It also links to bodies of literature which suggest that some C&YP may feel more comfortable discussing sensitive issues with peers than adults (Bovarnick and Scott, 2016; Hellevik et al., 2015). Furthermore, it resonates with an evidence base, mostly originating in Europe and North America, that highlights the important role of peers as a source of advice and support to C&YP affected by sexual violence (Allnock, 2015; DuBois and Felner, 2016). This is important given the well-established significance of trust and rapport in eliciting sensitive and reliable data (Braye and McDonnell, 2013; Devries et al., 2015; Graça, Gonçalves and Martins, 2017; Martin, 2013; SANLAAP, 2010; van der Meulen, 2015).

As noted previously, power differentials can equally exist between peers (Beckett et al., 2013; Firmin, 2015; Schumann, Craig and Rosu, 2014). Despite the advantages described above, it is important not to assume that C&YP are always best placed to access sensitive information from their peers. Indeed, there may be important ethical reasons why the opposite may be true in certain contexts. For example, Barter et al. (2015) note that not all young people are comfortable sharing sensitive information with peers, and, depending on the topic, may feel more comfortable with adult researchers. Similarly, UK-based research into gang-associated sexual violence specifically avoided using peer researchers as it was felt this could place young people at risk of violence, given the sensitivities within communities about information sharing (Beckett et al., 2013). Reflecting on her experience of researching violence with a group of young people in a conflict-ridden borough in Medellín, Colombia,[13] Blanchet-Cohen (2014) also acknowledges the significant risks associated with involving C&YP in research in high-conflict settings. As stated in Part 1, the principle of 'maximising benefits and minimising harm' provides helpful guidance for planning research projects.

Producing relevant research messages

As outlined in Part 1, participatory research seeks to enable those that are typically subjects of research to actively shape the design and process of knowledge creation on a topic affecting them. A range of sources highlight the benefits of participatory approaches to qualitative data analysis in research addressing sexual violence and/or wider forms of abuse (Beckett and Warrington, 2015; Cossar et al., 2013; Holland et al., 2010; Warrington et al., 2017). These benefits include gaining a more accurate understanding of the data and how to prioritise findings; opportunities to notice and access meaning that might otherwise remain hidden or overlooked; and ensuring findings are more likely to be fed back and reflected on by key stakeholder communities.

According to two key informants, C&YP can play a crucial role in prioritising research findings; they argued that this could enhance the relevance of research messages (Ints. 6 & 10). Particularly noteworthy is the scope for participatory analysis processes to actively engage C&YP in finding solutions to existing problems. Blanchet-Cohen remarks that participatory research processes can encourage young researchers to focus on solutions, drawing on their views on how participation in research had increased their understanding of the issues affecting them and their communities and what could be done to help to the situation (2014, p. 529).[14]

There is also recognition that participant-researchers can add unique value by means of their familiarity with relevant frames of references. In the context of child/youth participatory research, involving C&YP in data analysis can help to ensure that the meanings derived from evidence collected resonate with C&YP's own or their peers' experiences. In addition, C&YP may verify that common expressions used by young people are interpreted correctly (Beckett, 2017). This can potentially enhance the accuracy and credibility of research findings.

2.2.2 Participatory research can strengthen dissemination

Several benefits in relation to C&YP's involvement in disseminating research findings have been documented in the academic and grey literature (see Table 3 for a full list of references). Most notably, these relate to C&YP's role in informing dissemination plans (Blanchet-Cohen, 2014) and delivering these through dissemination events (Brown, 2006) or by creating accessible outputs (Beckett and Warrington, 2015; Cossar et al., 2013; Hagell, 2013; Warrington et al., 2017). This aligns with children's right to influence decisions affecting them.

Data from the SVRI Forum 2017 pre-conference workshop consultation suggest that C&YP's involvement can lend impact to dissemination (WS). The significance of C&YP delivering research messages themselves, rather than being represented by an adult spokesperson, was thought to increase the authenticity of research messages (WS). Blanchet-Cohen argues that drawing on young people's experience of their own community can

> "...make it easier for people to relate"
> (2014, p. 530).

Creating opportunities for C&YP to speak with authority and authenticity on issues affecting them or their communities can be a powerful vehicle for promoting their perspectives in broader policy and practice forums.

It is important to recognise that not all participatory dissemination requires C&YP to be involved in public events or speaking. Given the needs of many C&YP to retain anonymity in relation to sexual violence research (participatory or otherwise), alternative opportunities for them to be involved in sharing research messages and creating impact are critical. One key strength of involving C&YP in research dissemination is the opportunity to garner their support in ensuring outputs are accessible to a wide range of audiences, including C&YP themselves. A range of research projects on sexual violence (both participatory and otherwise) have involved C&YP in developing accessible outputs to ensure that research messages are heard and engaged with by their peers and wider communities.[15] These may include short briefings, leaflets, films, animations and websites (Barter et al., 2015; Beckett and Warrington, 2015; Cossar et al., 2013; Hagell, 2013; Warrington et al., 2017).

2.2.3 Participatory research can enhance outcomes for individuals and communities

C&YP's participation in sexual violence research can inform considerations of ethical issues relating to the outcomes for individuals and communities. This relates specifically to the impact of direct involvement in research for individual C&YP and closely aligns with benefits attributed to involvement in participatory initiatives more generally. Some writers also highlight the relationship between participatory research and social change, noting the scope for challenging wider social norms that allow sexual violence to flourish and for redressing the traditional hierarchies of research and knowledge production (Brown, 2006; Cody, 2017).

Individual and collective benefits

Although the scoping review found only anecdotal evidence[16] of the impact of participatory research on those involved in it, the documented benefits associated with participatory practice more generally may offer some transferable insights.

Experiences of sexual violence are typically characterised by feelings of isolation and powerlessness (Finkelhor and Browne, 1985). C&YP affected by sexual violence are often ignored or disbelieved and their disclosures are frequently not acknowledged or understood by professionals[17] (Allnock and Miller, 2013). Promoting opportunities for these C&YP to exert choice, experience influence and control and have their voices heard is therefore particularly significant in this field and may help to counter some of the traumatic effects of sexual violence (Beckett, Holmes and Walker, 2017; Bovarnick with D'Arcy, 2018; Hallett and Prout, 2003; Hickle, 2016; Warrington, 2016).

At times, the distinction between individual and collective benefits can be artificial. Some C&YP with experiences of sexual violence can feel that they are making a positive difference by speaking out on behalf of themselves and others affected about the injustice they face (Bovarnick with D'Arcy, 2018; Cody, 2017; Hagell, 2013). In a similar vein, one workshop participant at the SVRI 2017 Forum who identified as a survivor of child sexual abuse described the act of 'speaking out' and 'joining forces' with other 'survivors' to challenge sexual violence as a 'healing experience' (WS).

Though bringing together vulnerable groups can entail a range of challenges, meeting others with similar experiences can foster peer support and a sense of solidarity (Matthew and Barron, 2015). Participatory action research undertaken by Graça, Gonçalves and Martins (2017) with adult street-based sex workers in Coimbra, Portugal, illustrates that continued participatory action research can enhance solidarity in stigmatised groups that otherwise have little cohesion. Coser el al. (2014) further argue that creating a collective identity using participatory activities can instil a sense of belonging and community among participants which can form a platform for collective political action. This in turn relates to a growing evidence base about trauma-informed responses to sexual violence, highlighting the importance of 'connection with others' and 'peer support' (see Hickle, 2016). This resonates with the literature indicating that C&YP's involvement in campaigning and advocacy relating to sexual violence can have a positive impact on resilience, self-confidence, self-worth and can foster a sense of connectedness (Batsleer, 2011; Brown, 2006; Hagell, 2013; Houghton, 2015; Levy, 2012; Martin, 2013; Oliver et al., 2006).

Several authors also note that involvement in participatory activities can offer C&YP opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills, and to develop a positive self-identity and sense of purpose (Coser et al., 2014; Dentith, Measor and O'Malley, 2009; Ngutuku and Okwany, 2017). Drawing on an example of a youth-led research project investigating the issue of power in relation to adolescent sexuality and reproductive health in Ethiopia and Uganda, Ngutuku and Okwany (2017) noted that the young researchers reported a sense of pride in gaining respect and praise from peers, teachers, parents and the community, which boosted their self-confidence. Establishing a new strength-based or 'professional' identity (as a researcher or advocate) that is not primarily defined by deficit or victim-hood can be particularly valuable when young people/adults are trying to move away from situations of violence and abuse and into continued education or formal employment (Brown, 2006; Houghton, 2015).

2.2.4 Participatory research can challenge sexual violence

Transformative action and a commitment to social justice are at the heart of participatory research, and as such, participatory research projects can be a vehicle for social change. Specifically, there is evidence that participatory research can play a part in challenging social norms that allow sexual violence to flourish.

As mentioned in Part 1, sexual violence is 'stigmatised' and shrouded in cultures of silence (Know Violence in Childhood, 2017). Pearce (2018) argues that there is a relationship between society not openly discussing the issue and children feeling that they, in turn, cannot either (Ibid., p. 24).

13 The research built on an international cooperation project focusing on capacity-building activities to protect C&YP against violence. It was facilitated by an NGO (the International Centre for Education and Human Development). Taking place in Comuna 13, a conflict-ridden borough of Medellín, the project involved young people aged 14-19 who were recruited from four high schools by local facilitators. The participants were referred to as conflict-affected because of their highly volatile living situation and the fact they all shared stories of losing family members to violence.

14 The young people involved emphasised the importance of presenting solutions in engaging ways and identified same-sex peer-to-peer workshops, 'awareness walks' in the community and imagery or photography as most effective (p. 530).

15 Research on gang-associated sexual violence in the UK (Beckett et al., 2013) identified funding for a parallel participatory film project that engaged C&YP from gang-affected communities in developing short films to encourage representation and discussion of the issues among peer groups and communities (University of Bedfordshire, 2015). The films produced by the young people were shown at a local community event, which encouraged discussion about addressing the issues raised by the research, and were later included in national curriculum resource packs on sex and relationships education.

16 For reasons described, not many participatory (research) projects have been rigorously evaluated. More generally, there are methodological difficulties in measuring impact and determining whether or not individual initiatives have influenced change. However, some projects do attempt to assess outcomes from participatory projects by collecting data, mostly based on self-reporting by those involved or facilitating the initiatives.

17 Evidence from public inquiries and court cases on young people's experiences of child sexual exploitation in the UK suggests that child victims are often blamed, or their accounts remain ignored by professionals (Brodie et al., 2016; Warrington, 2013).

Several sources included in this review note that countering such 'normalisation', and awareness-raising, are frequently key components of participatory research. This occurs both for those directly involved, inviting young researchers and respondents to critically reflect on the issue (Hagell, 2013) and more collectively, raising the profile of sexual violence more widely amongst peers and at community level (Cody, 2017; Bovarnick with D'Arcy, 2018). Participatory processes have been highlighted as instrumental in addressing child sexual exploitation (Brodie et al., 2016; Brown, 2006; D'Arcy et al., 2015) and in promoting sexual violence prevention (Bovarnick with D'Arcy, 2018; Cody, 2017).

2.3 Barriers preventing initiation of participatory research

There is evidence of significant barriers which prevent the planning or initiation of participatory research on sexual violence with C&YP. These have been grouped into three themes: C&YP's vulnerabilities, the research competencies of adults and professionals, and the research competencies of C&YP.

2.3.1 C&YP's vulnerabilities

The evidence suggests that the dearth of participatory research activity involving C&YP affected by sexual violence is, at least to some degree, due to a reluctance to engage with 'vulnerability'. This is supported by a wider body of literature discussing the significant ethical, methodological and practical challenges in relation to both undertaking research with C&YP (Brown, 2006; Houghton, 2015) and involving stigmatised and vulnerable groups in participatory research on sensitive issues (Braye and McDonnell, 2013; Busza 2004; Graça, Gonçalves and Martins, 2017).

Specific ethical considerations for research with children

Even without a consideration of sexual violence and other intersecting forms of adversity and disadvantage, C&YP represent a particularly vulnerable group in research. The ethical principles underpinning research with adults – such as that of ensuring freely given and fully informed consent, and the right to withdraw from research participation – apply equally to those under 18. Relevant guidance, such as Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC) (Graham et al., 2013) or the Research Ethics Guidebook (Boddy et al., 2010), a resource funded by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), suggests there are at least four additional considerations specific to research involving children:

- children's competencies, perceptions and frameworks of reference may differ from those of adults, according to factors including – but not only – their age, – and may evolve over time;
- children's potential vulnerability to exploitation in interaction with adults, and adults' specific responsibilities towards children;
- power differentials between adult researchers and child participants; and
- the role of adult gatekeepers in mediating access to children, with concomitant ethical implications in relation to informed consent.

(Boddy et al., 2010; ESRC, 2017; Graham et al., 2013)

The ethical and legal considerations of involving children in research tend to be more complicated the younger the children are. This may explain why the scoping review identified very few research initiatives[18] that engaged children under the age of 14, and fewer still that adopted child-led or collaborative approaches (see Table 2, p. 33). Four adult key informants suggested that older teens and young adults may be better equipped than younger children to undertake research activities on sexual violence because of their educational level, research-related skills, understanding of the research process and topic and their maturity to address sensitive issues (Ints. 1, 2, 3 & 6). At the same time, there are examples of younger children being successfully involved in participatory research addressing different social issues by using creative methods including photography, mapping and drawing (Carroll and Sixsmith, 2016; Eckhoff, 2017; Levy and Thompson, 2015; Palaiologou, 2017).

According to Embleton et al. (2015) additional considerations also apply to involving C&YP in sexual violence research in LMIC, which may require

> "...additional considerations that are responsive to their needs and the social, cultural, and economic context, while upholding core ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice" (Ibid., p. 1).[19]

It is based on a recognition that there are likely to be a range of additional factors and vulnerabilities to be taken into account that may impact on C&YP's participation in research, including their ability to give and withdraw consent.

Re-traumatisation, secondary and vicarious trauma

It is crucial to acknowledge the potential for re-traumatisation when involving C&YP affected by sexual violence in participatory research on this topic. Dealing with sensitive and abuse-related information can trigger bad memories and prompt individuals to relive historical trauma. Participatory research on sexual violence therefore needs to carefully consider if and how exposure to such stories is ever appropriate for C&YP.

An additional consideration of sexual violence research involving vulnerable individuals is the potential for 'secondary trauma'[20] and 'vicarious trauma'.[21] Both are increasingly recognised as an occupational challenge for professionals who work on trauma-related subjects or with trauma-affected populations (Molnar et al., 2017).

Researching sexual violence in any context is a highly emotional experience and difficult task (Coles et al., 2014), involving repeated exposure to painful experiences of abuse and humiliation (Campbell, 2002; Dickson-Swift, James, & Liamputtong, 2008). There is, therefore, an inherent tension in sexual violence research between the need to retain a high level of emotional involvement, sensitivity and empathy towards respondents and the subject matter, whilst at the same time keeping a degree of psychological and emotional distance to ward off the negative effects of secondary traumatisation. By way of example, Campbell (2002) argues that, more than in most other fields of social research, researching rape requires a high degree of empathy and identification with research subjects and repeated exposure to stories of violence. She notes that:

> "...through repeated exposure to empathizing with victims, the very nature of our work puts us at psychological risk" (p. 103).

Interestingly given the centrality of 'risk' in debates around C&YP who are affected by sexual violence in research, there was surprisingly little discussion of secondary and vicarious trauma in the evidence reviewed. In recent years, the research community has started to take a stronger interest in this topic, however, and to explore the potential emotional and psychological impacts on researchers engaging in sexual violence research (Coles et al., 2014; Drozdzewskia and Dominey-Howes, 2015; Grundlingh et al., 2017; Molnar et al., 2017). While the evidence is not conclusive and more research is needed, the emerging body of literature highlights the need to recognise associated risks in relation to secondary/vicarious trauma and emphasises the importance of developing strategies to minimise researchers' vulnerabilities to the negative impacts of this work (Coles et al., 2014; Molnar et al., 2017; SVRI, 2015; see also the US Office for Victims of Crime's (2017) 'Vicarious Trauma Toolkit').

In the case of participatory research, this issue relates both to professional and participant-researchers. Recognising and mitigating against the risk of re-traumatisation and secondary and vicarious trauma is therefore particularly important when involving C&YP as participant-researchers, especially when they themselves may be affected by sexual violence and have experienced trauma. Preparing vulnerable C&YP emotionally and psychologically for this challenging task requires extremely careful consideration and planning. It raises several pertinent questions, for example, whether there are ways to involve C&YP in participatory research on this topic without exposure to abuse-related stories and, if not, whether and how C&YP can be psychologically prepared to handle such information. As Section 2.4.7 elaborates, there are a range of strategies to minimise the risks of re-traumatisation from dealing with potentially upsetting data, including adopting methods such as talking in the third person, or framing the research question to focus on prevention or services responses rather than on the abuse itself.

Resource implications

Even when professionals are willing to engage vulnerable C&YP in participatory research, the process can be challenging and is often resource-intensive (Åkerström and Brunnberg, 2013; Cody, 2017; Coser et al., 2014). In a collaborative research project involving street-involved youth by Coser et al. (2014), for instance, adult professional researchers devoted a great deal of time to supporting young researchers to overcome personal barriers to their involvement in research activities, some of which related to childhood traumas, homelessness, poverty, addiction, parenting responsibilities, mental and physical health issues, and unhealthy relationships. The provisions made to accommodate and support young researchers affected the project's timelines and budget (Ibid.). The example highlights the central and important point that undertaking safe and ethical participatory research will always require additional resources to ensure that C&YP's wider related needs can be properly met. Putting in place resources to meet those needs is an integral part of risk management strategies and it is important for funders and those involved in research design to understand this.

2.3.2 (Adult) professional research competencies

Given the limited number of relevant research initiatives reviewed, the evidence suggests that there are few individuals with experience of using child/youth participatory approaches in sexual violence research. The scoping review identified concerns over the capacity of professional researchers to involve vulnerable C&YP in this field. 'Competencies' here broadly refer to skills and confidence in initiating and undertaking research with vulnerable groups on highly sensitive issues. The available academic and grey literature by and large represents high levels of expertise in this area, but some of the workshop discussions, in contrast, noted a lack of confidence and knowhow across the wider academic research community about how to engage vulnerable C&YP safely in sexual violence research. Specific concerns related to: 1) navigating ethical issues; 2) managing the risks associated with sexual violence research; and 3) ways of working with C&YP in a research context more generally, using participatory, age-appropriate and creative methods (WS). Due to limited capacity, specialist expertise and confidence, some delegates argued that professional researchers may shy away from considering participatory approaches.

2.3.3 C&YP's competencies

The scoping review also identified concerns over C&YP's competencies in relation to participatory research. 'C&YP's competencies' refers to the ability to perform research and project-related tasks and, more generally, to speak with authority about issues affecting them.

Some authors raised specific concerns over C&YP's ability to undertake research on sexual violence. Ngutuku and Okwany (2017), for instance, report that project staff may be concerned about C&YP's research, language and communication skills and have doubts regarding their willingness to talk openly about the topic of sexuality with their peers.[22] In a similar vein,

18 There are examples of child-led research involving researchers as young as 13 (Ngutuku and Okwany, 2017) and 9 (Challenging Heights, 2013), and examples of collaborative research involving young researchers as young as 10 (Holland et al., 2010; Porter, 2016; Renold et al., 2008).

19 Embleton et al. (2015) describe processes and outcomes of adapting ethical guidelines to respond to the specific vulnerabilities of street-affected children in LMIC that may be transferable to other marginalised groups.

20 'Secondary trauma' occurs when an individual (e.g. a professional researcher or service provider) relates to someone (e.g. a client or patient) who has experienced trauma or a series of traumatic events to the extent that they begin to experience similar symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder to those the trauma victim is experiencing (Baird and Kracen, 2006).

21 'Vicarious trauma' refers to the prolonged exposure to traumatic experiences of others and develops over a period of time (Molnar et al., 2017; Best Start Resource Centre, 2012). Although vicarious trauma influences different people in different ways, it typically causes a permanent change in the professional, resulting from empathetic engagement with a client's/patient's traumatic background so that the relationship of the individual suffering from vicarious trauma to the world around them becomes altered (Coles et al., 2014; Garcia-Moreno & Watts, 2004; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995).

22 It is worth noting that participatory research does not always require C&YP to speak directly to their peers about sexuality or sexual violence and that participatory research is NOT synonymous with peer research.

Bradbury-Jones (2014) notes that the perceived lack in C&YP's research competencies may dissuade (adult) professional researchers from inviting C&YP to work as research collaborators. In addition to sharing these concerns, other authors also note that some professionals may be concerned about C&YP's ability to handle sensitive topics (Dentith, Measor and O'Malley, 2009; Kellett et al., 2004).

2.4 Learning from participatory research processes with C&YP to address sexual violence

This section presents key learning about undertaking participatory research with C&YP on sensitive issues and illustrates some of the complexities of such processes. Many of the issues discussed are interrelated and can affect more than one stage or aspect of the research process. For the purposes of clarity, the authors have attempted to discuss the findings in relation to eight distinct aspects of a research project:

1. **Research oversight and governance**
2. **Obtaining ethical approval**
3. **Recruitment and engagement**
4. **Gaining and maintaining consent**
5. **Confidentiality and disclosures**
6. **Group dynamics**
7. **Data collection and analysis**
8. **Dissemination and impact**

2.4.1 Research oversight and governance

Models of engaging C&YP in research oversight and governance

Evidence of C&YP's involvement in research oversight and governance was primarily through their engagement as members of project advisory boards or steering groups. This can provide a route through which C&YP can offer guidance on various aspects of research design and development. There appear to be two main models through which this takes place: 1) the inclusion of individual C&YP on professional (adult) advisory groups (see Beckett and Warrington, 2015); or 2) separate groups made up solely of C&YP which provide parallel advisory support alongside professional groups (see Barter et al., 2015; Beckett et al., 2013; Cossar et al., 2013; Warrington et al., 2017). These groups may be created for the purposes of research (Cossar et al., 2013) or be an existing group co-opted into the research process (see the 'STIR' study, **http://stiritup.eu**).

Both models described above present challenges for promoting C&YP's influence over the research design and process. In the former, C&YP's perspectives may be side-lined or undermined by older, professional voices. Predominantly adult or professional advisory groups may feel inaccessible to many C&YP and/or adult members may themselves not be prepared or have the skills to act inclusively. Although the latter model may represent a more inclusive, representative space for C&YP, the separation from professional perspectives may also result in side-lining their contribution, depending on the terms of reference and project management relationships.

2.4.2 Obtaining ethical approval

Ethics committees fulfil a vital role in promoting stringent ethical standards in research and seek to ensure that risk and harm to participants, researchers and wider communities involved in the research are minimised (Block et al., 2013; ESRC, 2017).

Unsurprisingly, ethics applications tend to rise in complexity in accordance with the degree of sensitivity of the proposed research, the perceived risks emanating from the proposed methodologies, and the levels of vulnerability of those the research seeks to involve. The workshop consultation revealed that concerns over ethics applications not holding up to the scrutiny of research ethics committees can act as a major deterrent to using, or considering, child/youth participatory approaches in sexual violence research (WS).[23]

The atypical nature of many processes involved in participatory research with C&YP may mean research committees are ill-equipped to advise or assess such applications. In addition, relevant expertise and ethics infrastructure, including processes for applying scrutiny and offering guidance on the ethical implementation of research, may not be readily available in some places. Ethical standards and requirements for conducting research vary widely across the globe and some authors note the need to develop stronger awareness of the importance of considering ethical issues and in assuring proper research governance in LMICs (Regmi et al., 2016).

Research consortia can potentially strengthen ethical research

Recruiting children from resource-poor settings as research subjects for 'foreign sponsored' studies has come under scrutiny (Roth, 2003). Such research is riddled with ethical challenges and issues (Teck Chuan and Schaefer, n.d.). HIC partners often rely on research partners from LMIC for their local expertise, including language skills, knowledge of local customs, understanding of 'how things work' and their ability to identify and access suitable research subjects and to engage key local stakeholders.

However if managed correctly research consortiums between researchers from HIC and LMIC can be ethical and build capacity, if these relationships are based on mutual respect, equity, and trust. This includes that researchers from LMIC must have the ability to analyse and publish the data gathered. Wherever possible, ethics approval for research being undertaken must be sought from a local ethics board as well as the ethics board of the institution based in the HIC.

Similarly, collaborations between organisations that have specialist expertise in facilitating participatory research with vulnerable C&YP in the field of sexual violence and those who are still developing expertise in this area may constitute a promising vehicle for cascading relevant knowhow and building capacity across the sector.

23 Three key informants, two of them young people, concurred that adopting an overly risk-averse or 'punitive' approach to those submitting ethics applications can dissuade researchers from adopting participatory approaches (Ints. 4, 9, 10). Two young key informants warned that this could exacerbate the exclusion of C&YP affected by sexual violence, because it hindered the proliferation of participatory research, thereby reducing the number of opportunities C&YP could potentially access (Ints. 4 & 10).

2.4.3 Recruitment and engagement

The scoping review identified several key issues around the recruitment and engagement of participant-researchers and wider research participants. These include challenges related to stigma, logistics, and organisational barriers, and issues concerning representation and live investigations, each of which is addressed in turn below.

Challenges related to stigma

As mentioned in Part 1, sexual violence is commonly associated with high levels of stigma, albeit in different ways in different contexts (Know Violence in Childhood, 2007; Pain, 1991; Saewyc et al., 2006). In many societies, sexual violence is a taboo topic that is not openly talked about (Aronson Fontes and Plummer, 2010; Avetisyan, 2018; Cody, 2017). Talking about this very personal issue to anyone, let alone a stranger, can provoke feelings of shame, embarrassment and fear (BabyLaw Okoli, 2015).

Data from the workshop consultation indicate that stigma is a barrier to recruitment and engagement, causing C&YP to feel reluctant about getting involved or being associated with this topic (WS).

Barriers to C&YP's involvement can also emanate from external sources: three key informants reported that C&YP commonly faced opposition and repercussions from family, peers or the wider community in relation to their participation in projects focusing on sexual violence (Ints. 1, 6 & 8). One key informant argued that there may be fears amongst the family or wider community regarding potential disclosures and social pressures to protect the identity of an abuser:

> "...in some cases, the child might still be living with the abuser(s)...participation can trigger fears that the child might tell" (Int. 1).

Consideration about how projects are described, both internally to stakeholders and externally to wider audiences, may be one means of addressing some of the issues relating to stigma, alongside careful planning about how young people explain their own relationship to the project in ways that feel safe.

Logistical challenges

The highly transient lives of some marginalised groups, such as street-connected C&YP or those affected by street-based forms of CSE, and the specific vulnerabilities arising from these may constitute logistical barriers[24] to their involvement in participatory research (Coser et al., 2014; Graça, Gonçalves and Martins, 2017; Matthew and Barron, 2015). Researchers may feel put off by complex recruitment processes and have concerns over potentially high drop-out rates and logistical challenges (Busza, 2004; Graça, Gonçalves and Martins, 2017).

24 For instance, potential barriers could emanate from domestic or intimate partner violence (abusive partner/family members exerting pressure on the potential participant), poverty (participant being restricted by the need to work; not having sufficient time/funds to participate in research), homelessness (participant not being permanently based near the research project), substance abuse or mental health issues.

Brown (2006) notes that common personal difficulties amongst vulnerable C&YP, including low self-confidence, stress and fatigue, may be compounded by situational difficulties, such as travel restrictions, child care obligations or partners or other family members exerting control over them. Managing the logistical and practical challenges associated with these often-complex situations has significant time and resource implications for research staff and organisations.

Restrictions in C&YP's availability due to commitments, such as work or school, means that those planning or commissioning participatory research need to consider potential loss of income because of engaging in research, and anticipate potential gaps in C&YP's involvement. Lushey and Munro (2015) note that this may mean that C&YP might not be fully involved in all stages of the research process, or that certain aspects will need to be adapted to enable C&YP's involvement. Indeed, overly ambitious plans to involve C&YP in all aspects of a research process may result in lower levels of representation if the required commitment or responsibility feels too onerous to potential participants.

Organisational barriers and gatekeepers

Participant-researchers and respondents are often accessed through service providers or specialist NGOs that work with the target group, due to their expertise and already established relationships with vulnerable populations. These organisations provide a gatekeeping role and, as several authors note, the primary focus of many such service providers is on crisis intervention and keeping their clients safe (Busza, 2004; Graça, Gonçalves and Martins, 2017; Houghton, 2015). Though these specialist workers may have the necessary skills and expertise to undertake crisis work with beneficiaries, they may simply lack sufficient time and resources to enter collaborations with researchers to support participatory research initiatives.

Even where independent researchers or facilitators have responsibility for managing research projects, inviting C&YP to participate in research is likely to have considerable resource implications for gatekeepers. For example, they may need to learn about and assess the appropriateness of the opportunity; support C&YP to make informed decisions about participating; support researchers to undertake individual risk assessments and planning; support the practicalities of C&YP's involvement; and be available for follow-up support if required. Two key informants noted that unless professional researchers acknowledge and can compensate for these resource implications, it may be untenable for service providers to support such initiatives (Ints. 6 & 8).

Issues of representation

As noted in Part 1, the wider participation literature has, at times, scrutinised the practice of accessing participants solely through specialist service providers due to tendencies toward unduly biased representation of more compliant children (Hart, 2009; Morrow, 2001). This literature raises questions about access and diversity and notes how such approaches may compromise the representational quality of the group involved in a participatory initiative. Evidence from both research and youth campaigns on child sexual exploitation shows that some groups of C&YP are typically underrepresented in participatory initiatives, including boys and young men and C&YP from black and minority ethnic groups (Brown, 2006; Warrington et al.,

2017); 'street connected youth'[25] (Kaime-Atterhög and Ahlberg, 2008; van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan 2017), and C&YP with disabilities (Franklin, Raws and Smeaton, 2015). Other groups that are rarely involved in research are C&YP living in situations of conflict (see Blanchet-Cohen, 2014; Bradbury-Jones, 2014; Mallan, Singh and Giardina, 2010).

There is evidence both from some of the literature and from key informant interviews to suggest that participatory research with C&YP in emergency contexts often focuses on other social or public health issues that intersect with sexual violence, such as access to resources, HIV/AIDS, sexual and reproductive health issues or teenage pregnancy, rather than explicitly engaging with sexual violence (Challenging Heights, 2013; McLean and Modi, 2016; Ints. 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 & 8). Three key informants suggested that focusing on related, less sensitive issues may perhaps feel easier and more manageable (Ints. 2, 5 & 6), allowing researchers to bypass many of the practical and ethical barriers associated with highly sensitive research topics, including those related to gaining ethical approval and the risk of vicarious trauma. Refusing to engage with these barriers, however, can mean that the focus on sexual violence is lost. It represents a missed opportunity to capture rare and important data on C&YP's experiences in relation to sexual violence in emergency contexts.

Several studies suggest that the above-mentioned groups of C&YP are at elevated risk of violence and abuse, including sexual violence and exploitation (Eaton, 2017; Franklin, Raws and Smeaton, 2015; Know Violence in Childhood, 2017; Ndulo, 2015; Smeaton, 2013; UN, 2017). Their exclusion from participatory research may be due to a combination of factors, ranging from a lack of recognition of the value of their knowledge to the challenges of engaging these groups in an ethical and appropriate manner (Mallan, Singh and Giardina, 2010). Identity-based forms of exclusion may be particularly pronounced in LMIC, corresponding to the broader evidence gap on SVAC in poorer contexts (Ellsberg, el al., 2014; Know Violence in Childhood, 2017).

C&YP involved in live investigations

Considerations as to whether involvement in participatory research is appropriate needs to take account of potential issues relating to any legal processes which young researchers and/or respondents are part of. In certain jurisdictions, if criminal justice procedures relating to the sexual violence are ongoing, careful consideration must be given before engaging individuals in related research (Warrington et al., 2017). Under these circumstances, participation in research may potentially jeopardise legal processes and confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed as data could be requested for use as evidence in court.

Risk and needs assessments

To mitigate some of the risks outlined above, four key informants talked about the importance of undertaking dynamic and individualised risk and needs assessments (Ints. 4, 7, 9 & 10). These should consider the specific vulnerabilities, needs and strengths of each potential young researcher and respondent to determine, on a case-by-case basis, the appropriateness of their involvement in a particular research project. Risk assessment processes for potential participants can also identify whether individuals are involved in live investigations, so such risks are known and properly managed.

Key informants also emphasised the importance of including C&YP in this process (Ibids.); one young key informant recommended talking openly with the individual child or young person concerned about the potential risks related to their participation and involving them in considering ways to address these (Int. 9).

Reiterating the significance of considering the ethical implications of excluding individuals from participatory opportunities, one of the young key informants stressed the importance of constructively engaging with risk, rather than

> "...taking it as an excuse not to involve C&YP" (Int. 9).

Evidence from UK-based research suggests that an overly risk-averse stance can replicate power differentials that exist in services targeted at vulnerable C&YP (Warrington, 2016). The young key informant stressed that making unilateral, 'professional' decisions to exclude a vulnerable child or young person

> "...can undermine their agency and be, in itself, experienced by some C&YP as disempowering and re-traumatising" (Int. 9).

Accessing marginalised groups

The scoping review listed several strategies that have been successfully used in participatory research to access marginalised groups of C&YP.

- **Snowballing:** word of mouth;
- **Respondent-driven sampling:** C&YP recruiting their peers (see WHO and UNAIDS, 2013);
- **Facility-based outreach** (e.g. visiting shelters or community centres);
- Outreach via **local partners** and/or service providers;
- Outreach via **schools** (local partners facilitating access); and
- **Advertisement** via parenting networks and public spaces (e.g. faith-based institutions, recreation or shopping centres).

2.4.4 Gaining and maintaining consent

Challenges relating to consent

As with all research involving C&YP, participatory research raises issues concerning informed consent. How to obtain informed consent, whether consent can be truly informed, and how to account for influences or constraints that compromise children's ability to freely opt in or out of research, are pertinent questions researchers grapple with (Cocks, 2006; Jupp-Kina, 2015; Houghton, 2015; WS; Ints). They highlight the ethical dilemma arising from unequal power dynamics in research and expose the limitations of consent in situations where vulnerable individuals may not have sufficient relevant information, understanding or capacity to make a free and informed choice.

Attempts to capture marginalised perspectives such as those of younger children, street-based youth, C&YP with learning disabilities or those with low literacy levels provide additional challenges and mean that reliance on written information sheets and consent forms may not always be appropriate. Reflecting on ethical dilemmas in doing research with itinerant street-vending C&YP in Nigeria, BabyLaw Okoli (2015) notes that the formality of a consent form can in some circumstances be off-putting. The children who were invited to participate in this study were given a one-page form seeking permission from their parents or guardians; some children chose to give consent verbally and some refused to take the form out of fears of being reprimanded or prevented from vending on the streets (Ibid., p. 545).

Due to common perceptions regarding their limited capacity to give verbal consent, younger children as well as children with communication difficulties or learning disabilities are frequently excluded from research rather than assessed on an individual basis (Oulton et al., 2016; p. 593). Although issues of consent tend to be more complicated in such contexts, researchers should not assume that children are necessarily incapable of providing consent because of their age or lack of verbal communication skills (ESRC, 2017).

Strategies for obtaining informed and engaged consent

There is broad agreement that consent should be a fully informed, continuous and active process. Age-appropriate, arts-based, creative and interactive methods, for example using 'consent games', drawing, or video or audio tools can be used successfully with younger children to obtain and maintain informed consent (Cocks, 2006; Houghton, 2015; Jupp-Kina, 2015; Warrington et al., 2017).

Obtaining consent using a rights game

In a participatory research project exploring participatory practice in three community-based NGOs in São Paulo, Brazil, the lead researcher developed a 'rights game' to explain her research and their rights as participants/respondents to the young people, and to stimulate discussion and reflection, while keeping them engaged and entertained through physical activity. Such processes support children to think critically, reflect with others and challenge adults. The use of physical activity also ensures active engagement and decision-making from all. Such processes can help researchers feel confident that C&YP fully understand the processes they engage with and have considered their implications. See Jupp-Kina's (2010) thesis available online for a full description of the rights game.

There is a gap in research specifically exploring the potential impact of exposure to trauma in early childhood on the ability to consent to participating in research. Literature on trauma-informed care suggests, however, that processes of obtaining consent from C&YP in the context of sexual violence research should also be trauma-informed. This entails building awareness of the impact of trauma, the importance of training researchers in trauma work, and of creating safe and healthy working environments to safeguard the wellness of participants and researchers and to minimise the risk of secondary or vicarious trauma (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018; Leitch, 2017; SAMHSA, 2017).

Methods of gaining consent need to consider the child's or young person's individual ability to understand the purpose of the project and their role in it. Existing guidance emphasises the role of the child's/young person's ability to communicate, verbally or otherwise (Graham et al., 2013; ESRC, 2017). A researcher's sensitivity and ability to read children's non-verbal cues, including body language, are important in this context. Researchers should make it easy for C&YP to withdraw consent in ways which do not provoke guilt, embarrassment or anxiety. To facilitate this, research processes may need to be explained in a range of different ways to younger audiences, requiring more time and resources to be dedicated to this (see Warrington et al., 2017). This includes ensuring C&YP understand their role and are fully informed about how the research is funded and managed, along with its intended use.

Consent workshops

Consent workshops can be a meaningful tool for negotiating informed consent. One key advantage of such workshops is the relatively generous amount of time allocated to ensuring that participants and/or respondents fully understand the implications of their involvement in the research (Busza, 2004; Ints.). In an action research project involving marginalised adult sex workers in Cambodia, consent workshops had participants/respondents review both the benefits and the risks of the project. Topics covered included loss of time and income as well as anticipated reactions from managers to sex workers' involvement in the research (Busza, 2004). Workshops can provide a useful tool to gain consent from participants/respondents with low or no literacy who may not be able to meaningfully give consent based on written information.

As noted, consent is an ongoing process and it is important to build in multiple opportunities and ways for C&YP to opt out of a participatory research process (see Beckett et al., 2013). Participants should be reminded of their right to withdraw consent at any stage of the research process and (if relevant) to have an option to have all, or part of, any personal data they have provided removed from transcripts and interview notes.

Maintaining consent may entail checking in with young researchers and respondents at regular intervals in a friendly and supportive manner to make sure that they are still happy with their level of involvement and contribution to the research (Beckett, 2017). It can be obtained through face-to-face conversations, regular telephone calls, emails, WhatsApp or text messages or other forms of communication.

2.4.5 Confidentiality and disclosures

Data protection and managing confidentiality emerged as significant challenges in the evidence reviewed, arising at various stages of the research process. Special reference is

25 'Street connected youth' refers to C&YP who permanently or temporarily live in street environments or informal settlements, and/or maintain livelihoods often through the informal economy. Such environments often present precarious living and working conditions that require C&YP to develop complex responses to their social and economic marginalisation, working on the fringes of the formal and informal urban economy (van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan, 2017).

made here to managing confidentiality in group and participatory analysis settings and managing disclosures.

Confidentiality in group settings

Challenges relating to confidentiality can arise from group-based processes, which often form a central part of participatory research. These need to be carefully planned and managed as confidentiality can never be guaranteed by professional researchers in these contexts (Warrington et al., 2017). For example, C&YP need support to make truly informed decisions about what they will share in the presence of others, especially if these are peers. Encouraging C&YP to share personal data may not always be appropriate in group-based settings and may increase individuals' sense of vulnerability and stigma (Ibid.).

Confidentiality in data analysis

One key informant suggested that there are complexities arising from the practice of generating data in shared physical space (Int. 10). In research where young researchers produce their own data by sharing their personal experiences, it may be unethical to engage the same C&YP in the analysis of this data, as this practice may render data anonymisation ineffective (Ibid.). In addition, the key informant stated that in many practice-based participatory research projects, young researchers and respondents tend to know each other well as they are commonly drawn from the same peer group. This can make it very easy for young researchers to identify each other's data, with the implication that anonymity may be compromised almost by default (Ibid.).

Managing child protection issues including disclosures

Child protection is not merely an ethical or moral issue but a legal requirement. A central issue when involving children in research (participatory or otherwise) is to ensure that child protection obligations, including those arising from potential disclosures, are met (Graham et al., 2013; ESRC, 2017; The Research Ethics Guidebook, n.d.). While many of the ethical considerations around working with children equally apply to vulnerable people over the age of 18, they are not formalised in the same way through legal requirements.

The responsibilities of meeting the ethical and legal obligations of child protection must lie with the professionals who are facilitating or supporting participatory initiatives, even if research initiatives are child/youth-led. The onus must not be, inadvertently or otherwise, on C&YP to handle potential child protection concerns resulting from potential disclosures, nor should they feel required to support others through, or to prevent experiences of, sexual violence (Hellevik et al., 2015). In practice, this means that adequate support structures, mentoring, child protection protocols, and referral mechanisms need to be in place to safeguard the well-being of young researchers and respondents, and to ensure that child protection concerns are handled in a timely and appropriate manner (SANLAAP, 2010).

When delegating child protection obligations to project partners in different countries, careful consideration should be given to how the fulfilment of ethical and legal obligations can be ensured and monitored. This was highlighted as a complex challenge in collaborative research projects between partners from HIC and LMIC by most key informants (Ints. 2, 3, 6, 7, 8 & 10). This discussion highlights the challenge of translating ethical recommendations into practice in different global contexts. It raises questions regarding the ethics of involving C&YP in sexual violence research in contexts where referral mechanisms work poorly, and adequate service provisions are not available (Devries et al., 2015). Although not drawing on participatory research, learning from Devries et al.'s 'Good Schools Study' in Uganda provides relevant learning.

Meeting legal and ethical obligations in the context of undertaking research on SVAC in LMIC

As part of the 'Good Schools Study' in Uganda, a large-scale survey was conducted. More than 3,700 primary school children were asked about their experiences of physical, sexual, and emotional violence from a range of different perpetrators. The researchers encountered significant challenges in relation to disclosures of abuse occurring during the survey. To respond to children's disclosures, referral procedures had been developed in conjunction with local services. The implementation of many of these procedures was straightforward, but the research team also encountered major challenges in relation to the response of local services to children's disclosures of violence. In some instances, the research team had to intervene to ensure that children received appropriate support and that ethical obligations were met.

The authors conclude that, in resource-poor settings, finding local services that can provide appropriate support for children can be challenging. Researchers need to have concrete plans in place to ensure that legal and ethical obligations can be met. In view of the challenges described, the merits of mandatory reporting of children's disclosures to local services need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, as in some places, this has the potential to do harm. Research teams should agree on appropriate levels of ancillary care, and budget accordingly. There is also a need to identify further practical examples of how these challenges can be addressed, to share learning and promote best practices (Devries et al., 2015).

Establishing effective referral mechanisms

In any sexual violence research initiative involving vulnerable C&YP (and adults), having clear referral pathways in place and adequate infrastructure to provide services is crucial. Two key informants cited a research project involving young people aged 18-24 in an emergency setting and reported that a referral pathway had been established for young researchers and respondents to address potential cases of secondary/vicarious traumatisation, based on existing community networks set up by UNHCR (Ints. 2 & 3).

To reduce the burden of responsibility of handling child protection concerns on young researchers, four key informants highlighted the need to establish clear protocols whereby any disclosure arising in the context of a project is mandatorily reported to a designated adult professional who will ensure that the concern is handled appropriately (Ints. 2, 3, 7, & 10). The process of handing over responsibility should be made as easy as possible for young researchers. For instance, one key informant had established a system whereby young researchers had to routinely fill out a mobile phone-based survey to find out about their experience and wellbeing after each interview. The survey included a question, only visible to the young researcher concerned, asking whether a disclosure had been made during the interview (Int. 2). If the answer was positive, the matter was immediately followed up by a member of staff so that young researchers would, at no point, be left to deal with disclosures alone (Ibid.).

2.4.6 Group dynamics

Managing complex group dynamics within participatory research processes

Managing complex group dynamics in the context of project advisory boards as well as in group work involving vulnerable groups more generally can present a range of challenges. Although C&YP may be drawn from the same constituency (e.g. 'beneficiaries'), they should not be presumed to necessarily constitute a homogenous (or harmonious) group as their biographies and personal characteristics may vary significantly. Participant-researchers and respondents may, in fact, be drawn from groups that have little cohesion, and are perhaps even marked by division and conflict, requiring the associated risks to be managed carefully (Barlow and Hurlock, 2013; Graça, Gonçalves and Martins, 2017).

As noted previously, power imbalances can also exist within peer groups. There is potential within such constituencies for new hierarchies to develop, sometimes linked to individuals' different experiences of oppression and their perceived entitlement to be part of a process. This can present additional challenges in managing potentially complex group dynamics and requires a safe space to be created and managed for different perspectives, needs and conflicts to emerge. None of the literature reviewed for this study considers this specifically in the context of involving vulnerable C&YP in participatory research on sexual violence, although four key informants acknowledged this issue (Ints. 1, 2, 3 & 10). It is also addressed in wider bodies of work addressing C&YP's participatory practice (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2015; Warrington forthcoming).

Re-defining power dynamics between professional and participant-researchers

Participatory processes are dynamic and reflexive in nature and, by implication, often require a high degree of flexibility and adaptation. Block et al. (2013) note the need for 'reflexive' research practice to acknowledge potential disparities in power between professional researchers and participants as well as among young researchers and respondents. As power dynamics between those involved in the process shift, so do the roles and the parameters for interaction. This can be challenging and, at times, take some professional researchers out of their comfort zones. During a community-based participatory research project with five former sex workers using the 'Photovoice'[26] method to develop understanding of the psychosocial histories of people involved in the sex trade, Barlow and Hurlock (2013) recount that participant-researchers insisted that the professional researchers facilitating the study, too, should share their personal stories through photographs. This constituted a departure from one-directional styles of inquiry that allow researchers to ask questions, to observe, and to shield behind a professional façade, leaving respondents comparatively exposed. The call for self-disclosure required the professional researchers to become an active part of the process, rather than merely facilitating the research (Ibid.). It marked a shift in power and re-determined who was in control of the research process.

Setting safe parameters for involvement

Involving C&YP in participatory ways in the development of group working arrangements and establishing the rules and parameters of their engagement can be a useful strategy to mitigate against some of the challenges associated with group work. Such approaches draw heavily on traditions in youth and community work and often involve the development of shared working agreements or contracts which all participants sign up to (professional and otherwise) (Factor, Chauhan and Pitts, 2001). Similarly undertaking risk assessment exercises collectively provides opportunities to draw on multiple perspectives and use group problem solving to develop risk management strategies (Warrington forthcoming).

2.4.7 Data collection and analysis

The scoping review identified several challenges in data collection and analysis that are linked to the specific complexities of involving vulnerable groups in participatory research processes. These were based on C&YP's lack of research competencies.

C&YP's confidence and skills in relation to data collection and analysis

With reference to data collection, Fleming (2011) reports that, based on her experience of working with young researchers on a variety of research projects, young researchers do not always probe and get the level of depth an adult researcher might seek. Similarly, two key informants noted that the younger and less experienced the young researcher, the longer it took them to reach a point at which asking probing questions came naturally (Ints. 2 & 3).

With reference to data analysis, there is evidence to suggest that without support and guidance, participant-researchers may feel overwhelmed at the prospect of independently managing and synthesising large data sets, establishing consistent coding mechanisms, developing rigorous strategies to interpret the data consistently across different data sets, and deriving meaning from the information collected (Challenging Heights, 2013).

Blurred boundaries between young researchers and respondents

The scoping also identified complexities arising from the blurred boundaries between participant-researchers and respondents, who are commonly drawn from the same constituency. This can pose several challenges in data collection. An example from the academic literature specifically draws attention to this issue in the context of peer research. According to Braye and McDonnell (2013), the proximity between peer researchers and respondents can raise ethical questions. In their collaborative

26 PhotoVoice promotes the use of photography to create opportunities for people to represent themselves and tell their own story. It can be used in participatory projects to build the skills and capacity of underrepresented communities, creating new tools of self-advocacy and communication. For more information, visit the Photovoice website: **photovoice.org**

research project with young fathers, the close bonds between peer researchers and respondents caused discomfort in relation to sharing sensitive and personal information from fellow fathers during debrief sessions (Ibid.). For some peer researchers, discussing data from these interviews felt like a breach of trust. Gaining and maintaining informed consent and making transparent the limitations of confidentiality are especially important in the context of involving vulnerable groups in research on sensitive topics.

Challenges related to reflexivity[27]

Concerns over C&YP's ability to exercise 'researcher neutrality', perhaps in part due to the issue discussed above, emerged as a recurring theme in the evidence reviewed. Four key informants noted that some young researchers struggled to distance themselves from other participants' and/or respondents' views, at times concurring with 'false' beliefs during interviews and reinforcing misconceptions about sexual and reproductive health issues (Ints. 2, 3, 5 & 7). In a similar vein, Braye and McDonnell (2013) report that, in their study involving young fathers, peer researchers felt inclined to give respondents personal advice when interviewing them. This raises questions in relation to the role of participant-researchers and how to set appropriate boundaries within the context of participatory research.

One key informant further noted related challenges in data analysis as some young researchers struggled to critically review the data, taking much of the evidence that had been collected as 'truth'. The informant felt that this potentially undermined the rigour of the research findings (Int. 1).

The idea of 'researcher neutrality' is based on a positivist paradigm which, at least to some extent, continues to influence the social sciences (Adorno, 1976; Giddens, 1977; Weber, 2004). The assumption that researchers can be neutral and objective, however, is highly contested on grounds that if reflexivity is part of everyday social practice, it must also shape the everyday activities of social researchers (Blaikie, 2000, p. 53). Data is thus always interpreted through the personal, biographically-determined lens of the researcher, and knowledge is produced through the interaction between researchers and the researched (Giddens, 1979). Concerns about researcher neutrality highlight challenges in relation to, as well as the importance of, reflexivity, which of course should be a critical component of any research. In the context of participatory research, these concerns can be amplified. They may be linked to the lower levels of formal academic training and/or research experience that young researchers have gained in comparison to many (adult) professional researchers.

Challenges arising from poor understanding of sexual violence

The challenges in relation to reflexivity are in part conditioned by the high levels of stigma attached to sexual violence. Given that sexuality is a taboo topic in many societies (Avetisyan, 2018; Aronson, Fontes and Plummer, 2010; Cody, 2017), there are limited spaces in which C&YP can learn about healthy relationships.

Reflexivity is arguably further hampered by the normalisation of sexual violence (see p. 19). This may be particularly pronounced in some settings, including highly gender-inequitable and patriarchal societies (Jewkes, Penn-Kekana and Rose-Junius, 2005), gang-affected areas (Beckett, et al. 2013; Blanchet-Cohen, 2014), post-conflict and emergency settings (Know Violence against Children, 2017; UN, 2017; Ndulo, 2015), or in resource-poor contexts, where selling or swapping sex may be a means for survival (Coetzee, Gray and Jewkes, 2017). Whilst 'survival sex' is common throughout the world[28] (Barker, 1993), it is believed to be particularly prolific in some settings, including refugee or internally displaced persons camps (Liebling-Kalifani, et al., 2008; Human Rights Watch, 2005).[29] As one key informant noted:

> "...when basic needs [of water, food and shelter] are not being met, sexual violence may be the least of their [children's] problems" (Int. 1).

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that poor knowledge of sexual violence – in part resulting from the issues described above – can affect C&YP's involvement in participatory research.

Data collection

Five key informants reported that the normalisation of sexual violence can lead to a de-sensitisation to the issue, which can potentially compromise a researcher's ability to engage with vulnerable respondents (Ints. 1, 2, 3, 6 & 8). Four key informants believed that the de-sensitisation was directly linked to C&YP's own experiences of abuse (Ints. 1, 2, 3 & 6). Reflecting on involving young people as researchers to explore wider protection issues in emergency settings, one key informant recounted:

> "Some young researchers have been through tough experiences and are very direct – almost shouting at respondents, or asking very direct questions [about violence] in some forceful ways... The [adult] research team left it to eight months until the young researchers were ready to ask questions about gender-based violence in a sensitive way. It was an on-going process with feedback and supervision by research staff." (Int. 2).

Three key informants noted the need to 're-sensitise' young researchers to the problem of sexual violence in efforts to foster sensitive interviewing and listening skills (Ints. 1, 3 & 8). Without this, they felt the young researchers' ability to ask sensitive questions, empathise with respondents, and make respondents feel safe during interviews could be undermined (Ibids.).

Two key informants stressed the importance of pre-empting the risks of causing upset to respondents (and other researchers) in the context of abuse-related research (Ints. 2 and 3). In one example cited, young researchers received training focused on developing key competencies and personal qualities such as kindness, listening skills, patience, empathy and adopting a non-judgmental attitude.

It is critical to recognise that, in some circumstances, de-sensitisation may be part of a coping mechanism for some individuals affected by sexual violence, serving as a defence against extremely distressing, painful experiences (Schiraldi, 2000). The process of re-sensitisation may require therapeutic work, the involvement of specialist professionals such as trained therapists, clinicians or youth/social workers, and longer-term interventions. Research and service provision may be combined, particularly in resource-poor nations (Coles et al., 2014), but this should not be presumed to be the case everywhere. In many cases, high levels of therapeutic engagement may be outside the scope of a participatory research project, not least because many professional researchers will not have the relevant expertise, time or resources to undertake therapeutic work.

Data analysis and implications for dissemination

Limited understanding of the topic, due partly to the reasons described above, may undermine the identification of references to sexual violence in the evidence gathered. Important information may be lost or not considered as 'sexual violence'. In addition, poor understanding of the research topic may also inform unhelpful or harmful messages that can potentially be disseminated, formally or informally, to a wider audience, as the following participatory research project exploring reproductive health issues in Ghana demonstrates.

Challenges arising from misconceptions around sex

During a child-led study on reproductive health issues in Ghana, limited knowledge of the research topic (teenage pregnancy) at times made it difficult for some of the young researchers to distinguish between 'opinions' and 'facts' in respondents' responses. Some of the data emerging from peer interviews were not critically reviewed but taken as 'true' (e.g. 'condoms are bad'). The lack of critical engagement with the evidence produced research findings that were problematic. This had serious implications for dissemination. During a school event, the young researchers presented research messages to their classmates, which included several harmful beliefs about sex. The facilitators were then faced with the challenge of having to ensure that those attending the presentation did not leave with misinformation whilst, at the same time, being mindful not to undermine the legitimacy of the research findings that the children had produced. (Challenging Heights, 2013).

As the example illustrates, there can be tensions in participatory research between ensuring that messages from research are well-informed, whilst not undermining C&YP's agency in the process.

Building professional capacity to use participatory and creative methods

The academic literature recognises that to mitigate the challenges described above, involving vulnerable groups in data collection and analysis in the context of sexual violence research needs to be facilitated by skilled and experienced professional researchers (Blanchet-Cohen, 2014; Graça, Gonçalves and Martins, 2017; Lushey and Munro, 2015;). As noted previously with reference to adult professionals' competencies (see 2.3.2), there is a need to build capacity across the research community in relation to using age-appropriate and participatory methods of collecting data on sexual violence.

Though not all are necessarily inherently participatory, there are a range of creative and interactive methods,[30] arts-based tools such as Photovoice (see Ribeiro Peireira et al., 2017, or Selestine, 2017), theatre-based approaches (Clarfelt, 2017), audio/video-based tools (StoryCenter, n.d.) and visual and sensory techniques that lend themselves well to working with C&YP on sensitive social issues in the context of participatory research. Many of these have been used in diverse cultural contexts, including with groups that have been affected by trauma. They offer researchers several benefits on grounds of their:

- accessibility to diverse groups of C&YP (particularly where they do not rely on literacy);
- ability to sustain the engagement of C&YP;
- ability to encourage critical reflection among participants and make data analysis processes more transparent and integrated with data collection; and
- ability to 'ground'[31] C&YP who may be experiencing symptoms of trauma (see Warrington et al., 2017).

There is a significant body of literature and guidance on how to use participatory and creative research methods with C&YP (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2015; Robinson and Gillies, 2012; Mand, 2012; Cody, 2015; Save the Children, 2003/2004/2005), though a comprehensive discussion of this is outside the remit of the report.

Trauma-informed practice

Within social support services there is increasing recognition of the need for work with C&YP affected by sexual violence to adopt 'trauma informed' approaches (Sweeney et al, 2016; Ford J and Blaustein M (2013). Broadly speaking this means: recognising the signs, symptoms and impact of trauma in individuals; responding by integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and seeking to actively resist re-traumatisation (SAMHSA, 2018).

27 In the context of this discussion, 'reflexivity' refers primarily to the ability to critically engage with human belief systems that embed the information gathered.

28 It is recognised here that 'survival sex' is common throughout the world and has been extensively studied in many countries, including the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Philippines, Thailand, New Zealand, Colombia, Kenya, Uganda, and South Africa (Barker, 1993).

29 For example, in the aftermath of the conflict between Ugandan government forces and the militant Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda, in which 1.4 million civilians were displaced, there is evidence to suggest that a high number of displaced women and girls engaged in survival sex with other camp residents, local defence personnel, and Ugandan government soldiers (Liebling-Kalifani et al., 2008; Human Rights Watch, 2005).

30 The Participate website provides a range of resources on participatory methods: **http://participatesdgs.org/methods/**

31 Grounding activities or exercises have been defined as techniques that help to keep someone in the present or to reorient a person to the here and now. They can be used for managing overwhelming memories, strong emotions or dissociation and to help someone to regain their mental focus from an intensely emotional state (SAMHSA, 2014).

While little is written about intergrating trauma-informed approaches into research, some evidence was identified of data collection activites that consider the impact of trauma and adapt approaches accordingly. In particular research methods which rely on practical or physical tasks, such as mapping, drawing or other creative research tools, were noted to reduce the emotional intensity of involvement in research (Warrington et al., 2017). Three key informants highlighted the benefits of using methods that enable C&YP to discuss and reflect on issues without direct reference to personal experience, such as using composite case studies. Images or vignettes are also commonly used in participatory research to give participants a chance to distance themselves from the data (Ints. 2, 3 & 7). 'Distancing' or 'projective' techniques that encourage C&YP to talk about a hypothetical person rather than themselves were highlighted as helpful in structuring research activities in a way that enables young researchers to maintain some emotional distance (Ibids.).

The academic and grey literature also note the importance of taking practical steps to guard the emotional well-being of researchers and participants during the research processes in efforts to ward off re-traumatisation and secondary/vicarious trauma. This can include providing a safe environment to which participants (young researchers and respondents) can retreat at any stage of the research process, by having a separate room allocated for this purpose, and giving them a choice not to participate in activities or to pull out of the process at any stage (Busza, 2004; UNHCR, 2005; Plan, 2009; SANLAAP, 2010). It is also important to consider that C&YP's choices in relation to giving or withdrawing consent may be constrained, particularly in resource-poor settings – and thought should be given to how to redress such dynamics (Graham, et al., 2013).

Mentoring, regular de-briefs and supervision can also help young researchers to offload and be a safe space for reflection. Wherever possible, professional counselling should be available.

Recognising and building C&YP's competencies

Bradbury-Jones (2014) argues that to address perceived competency barriers in relation to C&YP, it is important to start by assuming that C&YP are competent to form their own views, inherently capable, and able to learn the necessary skills to engage in participatory research.[32] This requires a shift from a deficit towards a strength-based model. All but one key informant argued that C&YP's competencies tend to be underestimated and, with training and support, young researchers can often excel and exceed expectations (Ints. 1-8 & 10).

Participatory research processes should be supported by skilled facilitators who can provide guidance in accordance with the levels of skills, knowledge and previous research experience of the C&YP involved. Some young people have stressed that it is important that

> "...adults don't lead but empower us"
> (young person cited in Houghton, 2015).

Similarly, all three young key informants in this study said they wanted professional researchers to provide them with 'tools' and advice, as and when required (Ints. 4, 5 & 9).[33] Providing timely and tailored guidance can promote independence, foster competencies and instil confidence in C&YP to initiate and undertake their own research projects. In the words of one young key informant:

> "...help us learn how to do it by ourselves"
> (Int. 9)

McLean and Modi (2016) suggest that mentoring can be a useful tool in this context. The young researchers involved in their study were mentored throughout the participatory research process, which also included elements of self-monitoring, where C&YP reflected on and assessed their own capacities, such as organisational, problem-solving, social and research skills, at regular intervals. Similarly, Addy (2015) employed peer-to-peer teaching sessions during which peers taught each other how to use some of the research tools, as part of a youth-led study investigating urban crime and youth employment in slum areas in Kampala, Uganda. These can be helpful and empowering strategies to promote young researchers' self-efficacy.

Giving C&YP ample opportunities to rehearse research skills, for example by undertaking practice surveys and interviews, and providing ongoing support and constructive feedback, were also highlighted as crucial by all key informants (Ints. 1-10). In addition to group training, Coser et al. (2014) suggest that facilitators may need to provide one-to-one learning support to some young researchers.

One relevant initiative identified through the call for evidence used a training programme to engage C&YP as researchers in studies on gender-based violence. The training followed this format:

Ask: the topic of the session is introduced to young researchers by asking them what they know and think about this topic.

Explain: simple language and visual examples are used to explain the topic.

Activity: this can take many forms from role-playing games to small tasks in pairs or groups. These activities keep young people engaged and provide opportunities to practice interviewing skills.

Reflect: The group comes together and reflects on key messages from the session. Participants can ask any questions or for clarifications. (Girl Effect, 2017b)

The training manual also outlines several key principles that can help to keep C&YP engaged as described below.

32 There is evidence in academic and grey literature to support this. SANLAAP (2010) argue that C&YP are well placed to determine the appropriateness of research methods used, particularly when the topic of study directly resonates with their own experiences. McLean and Modi (2016) similarly report that participatory research can generate high quality data. For example, young researchers involved in their participatory study on the economic and social empowerment of adolescent girls and young women in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, achieved high levels of consistency across the interviews they conducted. Given that their research findings concurred with the existing evidence base, the authors conclude that this justifies confidence in the results (Ibid.).

33 Two young key informants noted that they would like specific guidance on how to navigate gatekeepers, on writing successful ethics applications and on how to develop robust coding systems for data analysis (Ints. 4 & 9).

Key principles of keeping children and young people engaged

Young people-led: give young researchers the opportunity to give their input and voice their opinions before teaching them the research methods and technical skills.

High energy: keep the training fun and interactive. The idea is that young researchers will learn more if they are doing as much as possible rather than sitting and listening for long periods of time.

Interactive: encourage young researchers to learn by experience through role-playing and exercise. The aim is for young researchers to learn by making mistakes and reflecting on this.

Confidence building: the training should give young researchers opportunities to grow in confidence and receive positive feedback. Making mistakes is the best way to learn.

Simple: everything should be explained as simply as possible. Academic concepts and theories should be simplified, and jargon should be avoided. (Girl Effect, 2017b)

Adapting the research design to suit the C&YP involved

Research design and processes may need to be adapted and tailored to reflect the availability of time and resources; furthermore, they should suit the requirements and interests of the C&YP involved. This may involve simplifying complex processes. In addition, there is value in focusing on areas in which C&YP's involvement can add the most benefit to the research and to tailor the research design accordingly (SANLAAP, 2010).

Several papers focusing on child/youth participatory research discuss modifying research methods for data collection to accommodate low literacy levels (Addy, 2015; Block et al., 2013; McLean and Modi, 2016; van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan, 2017). Example methods included using audio versions of interview guides, employing smartphones or tablets to record interviews, or undertaking activities verbally or using drawings (Ibids.).

Learning from involving C&YP in qualitative data analysis processes shows that traditional qualitative data analysis processes may need to be adapted to include a range of creative and/or collaborative approaches (Addy, 2015; Beckett and Warrington, 2015; Cossar et al., 2013; Holland et al., 2010; McLean and Modi, 2016; van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan, 2017; Warrington et al., 2017). A participatory study with C&YP in the care of a local authority in the UK (Holland et al., 2010) found that informal methods of involving C&YP in data analysis worked well. The methods employed in this study considered C&YP's preferred modes of communication and, for instance, recognised that the C&YP involved were not interested in reading through large transcripts. Instead, adult researchers shared the content of such transcripts with C&YP through informal conversations. Grouping data thematically before sharing it with young researchers and facilitating data coding visually using flipcharts can also help to make data analysis more accessible to C&YP (Lushey and Munro, 2015).

2.4.8 Dissemination and impact

Several key issues emerged from the reviewed evidence in relation to dissemination of research findings from participatory research. These include challenges related to communicating sensitive data on sexual violence and wider questions regarding the impact and legacy of C&YP's involvement in participatory research.

Challenges in communicating sensitive findings

Disseminating outputs from participatory research initiatives can be a difficult balancing act, not least because the messages C&YP produce may challenge existing norms and power structures. Sharing sensitive findings back to communities and policy-makers can evoke uncomfortable feelings and put C&YP involved in dissemination activities at risk. There may also be a disconnect between young researchers' findings and adults' perceptions of C&YP's realities (Challenging Heights, 2013; Ngutuku and Okwany, 2017) and the act of raising awareness on sexual violence by C&YP, can, in some cases, be met with disbelief and resistance by both peers and adults (Bovarnick with D'Arcy, 2018).

Taylor and Percy-Smith (2008) highlight the inherent paradox that can rise from child/youth participatory practice, suggesting that even when encouraged to articulate their views, C&YP often experience a lack of validation and their influence is constrained by adult values and priorities.

Drawing on participatory research using Photovoice to explore problems regarding impunity and lack of services for victims of SVAC, one adult key informant reported experiencing pressures to 'sanitise' the research messages:

> "We had a dissemination event for a research project using Photovoice where children put up pictures. Some pictures were taken away because they were not [considered] appropriate for the facilities. [They were] about issues of rape by the police, domestic girl workers acting as sex objects. The pictures would show a home, or a public place in town that could be identified and [we] were told to put them [the pictures] away." (Int. 8).

Dissemination strategies for sharing highly sensitive and political research messages should consider issues of legality, ethics and confidentiality. For instance, findings from research into rape of sex workers by police in South Africa were communicated in ways that respected sex workers' stories but left the door open to work with police on improving the situation (Sonke Gender Justice and SWEAT, 2017).

It is also vital to ensure that confidentiality is not breached, deliberately or accidentally, during dissemination events (Ints. 6 & 8). One key informant reported an incident during which a group of young researchers disclosed the identities of perpetrators and victims during a presentation that sought to

draw attention to problems of SVAC perpetrated by individuals in positions of authority in their local communities (Int. 8). This led to a range of challenges not only for those implicated but also at organisational and political levels. In addition, it potentially placed the C&YP involved in the project at risk of further harm. The dissemination event had to be interrupted and subsequent events cancelled to minimise further damage (Ibid.). Reflecting on this experience, the facilitator noted:

> "[It's] children being very honest about their experiences with government institutions... the police – causes a lot of challenges. [Children] talk about things that people in government and the police do not want to hear... Children do not speak necessarily as a trained researcher who is well grounded in research ethics, they are basically telling their story – very straightforward –, for example: 'a policeman from this station in Kampala raped me' – it's very sensitive." (Int. 8).

It is important for those undertaking sexual violence research to acknowledge that communicating sensitive data can be challenging. Including vulnerable C&YP in such activities can present particular ethical issues. Young researchers should be supported in carefully thinking through the possible implications of sharing their own or others' personal stories in group or public settings. At the same time, facilitators should also communicate their willingness and commitment to listen to C&YP's experiences and perspectives, and provide safe opportunities to do this, should they choose to share personal information.

Challenges in achieving impact

Related to the previous challenge, the scoping review found that most of the research explored within this scoping review is undertaken in 'invited spaces' (Cornwall, 2004, p. 78) where C&YP's activities take place in existing structures that are typically defined or controlled by adults. Recognising and acknowledging the limits this places on C&YP's influence is of key importance to analysing their participatory nature and avoiding overblown claims of empowering practice.

This raises the overarching question of how to apply, in practice, an ethos of contributing to social justice, which is at the very core of participatory research. More specifically, it identifies a challenge arising from moral obligations towards those involved in participatory research and the wider constituency they represent. According to one key informant:

> "The role of the research is to build an evidence base that may improve the situation of children affected by the issue in the long term, but there is no expectation to improve the situation of individual children (young researchers or respondents) as part of the research project." (Int. 8).

This is a contentious issue deserving careful consideration, particularly given that some of the C&YP involved in participatory research may hold expectations in terms of what the project is able to achieve in relation to social change or support, either on an individual or collective basis. A study by Girl Effect (2017a), for instance, noted that some respondents believed that research reports would translate into immediate action and provide relief in their community. Similarly, researchers interviewing children about their experiences of taking part in the 'Good Schools' survey in Uganda reported that the

> "...main factor in their decision to disclose was the expectation of help, or in the hope that something would change and they would no longer be at risk of violence." (Devries et al., 2015, p. 7).

Young experts in Houghton's (2015) participatory study on young people's perspectives on participatory ethics in the context of domestic abuse research and policy-making argued that C&YP should not be involved if change, such as improving the situation for victims, was not possible.

Whilst this raises fundamental questions about how effective participatory initiatives can be within existing structures (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Cornwall, 2004), it also highlights the potential feelings of frustration and powerlessness that researchers may experience in this field of work. As Coles et al. (2014) note:

> "The role of a researcher is different from that of a clinician or counselor and potentially more traumatizing because of an inability to 'help' the victim... Researchers identify problems and needs, but may feel unable to provide any assistance that helps survivors cope with their experience of sexual violence" (p. 96).

Dealing with emotions of helplessness whilst feeling the burden of moral obligation towards research participants can be a source of considerable emotional and psychological stress for researchers and render them prone to vicarious traumatisation. Devising a focused research uptake plan that includes an advocacy element aimed at promoting social change can help to transform researchers' feelings of helplessness. It is useful to plan a key stakeholder analysis at an early stage and to devise strategies for political engagement at the stages of inception/planning, implementation and in the aftermath of research projects.

Questions of legacy

Questions of what happens to young researchers after a project ends and whether their involvement will have a legacy are important considerations not only at the end but also at the planning stages of participatory research. Follow-up with C&YP has been highlighted as a weak area in the broader field of participatory practice, including youth consultations (Veitch with Corazon Buala, 2007, pp. 56-67).[34] Although this forms part of the key practice standards in children's participation (Save the Children, 2005), evidence in the scoping review suggests that the question of 'sustainability' may sometimes be overlooked, misunderstood, or informed by unrealistic expectations in relation to the amount of funding, levels of resources or time allocation available to participatory research.

Two key informants highlighted that transitioning out of participatory initiatives can be a period of anxiety and uncertainty for some C&YP, also pointing to the issue of 'ageing out' of child/youth participation (Ints. 9 & 10). This is a particularly pertinent issue for young people's advisory boards, which may have involved individuals or groups of young people over longer periods of time.[35]

Preparing C&YP for public speaking on sexual violence

Evidence shows that if it is the intention of a project to involve C&YP in public dissemination, it is important that this is properly planned for and supported, and that informed consent is sought at every stage of the process (Jewkes, Dartnall, and Sikweyiya, 2012). As noted earlier this includes supporting C&YP to carefully consider the impacts of sharing personal information in such settings and to plan events which protect participants from a need to do this. In addition it is important to ensure that C&YP are provided with support to learn about sexual violence more broadly and can practice speaking about it to feel comfortable communicating about this topic within and outside the project.

Preparing young researchers for speaking engagements and dissemination events, through training on communication skills and public speaking, should include strategies for addressing different stakeholders.[36] Risk assessing these processes is also crucial and can be undertaken in participatory ways, involving C&YP in anticipating challenges, both personal and those that come from external audiences. It is important that preparation and training recognise potential barriers: for example, young researchers may deliver their research messages to audiences that question their agency, competencies or entitlement to speak to decision-makers or other relevant stakeholders; inappropriate questions may be asked; or assumptions made about the personal experiences of C&YP involved in participatory initiatives. This raises the importance of considering any legal implications and how to maintain anonymity of respondents and data.

Ways to acknowledge C&YP's contributions and promote sustainability

It is important to consider strategies to ensure that potentially positive outcomes of involvement in participatory research are maintained beyond the duration of a given project and offer lasting benefits to the C&YP involved. Ideally this requires consideration and planning during the initial research design stages and should be properly resourced. On a practical level, this can mean that C&YP's contributions are recognised or documented in a way that is useful for their continued training and education or future employment (van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan, 2017) such as through formal accreditation (Hagell, 2013). A study by Girl Effect (2017a) in cooperation with Oxfam, for instance, awarded young researchers an accreditation with the UK's Market Research Society upon the completion of their training in digital interviewing skills.

Despite ongoing debates in relation to 'undue inducement'[37] of research participants (Largent et al., 2012; Savulescu, 2002; Adejumo, 2012), financial remuneration is a common and, in many circumstances, appropriate form of acknowledgement (Graham et al., 2013). For some C&YP, time dedicated to participation in research may result in a loss of income. As part of a youth-led study investigating urban crime and youth employment in slum areas in Kampala, Uganda, young researchers were asked for their preferences regarding various forms of remuneration. In addition to receiving allowances, they requested receiving English language tuition, a certificate of participation, a graduation party and an identification card. The latter was of significance to the young researchers as many of them did not possess any form of identification, which prevented them from undertaking various activities such as opening bank accounts or registering a mobile phone (Addy, 2015). Furthermore, the scoping review identified examples where young researchers were given employment, volunteering, or further training opportunities by project partners (Addy, 2015; Coser et al. 2014; Ngutuku and Okwany, 2017; van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan, 2017).

Closing participatory research projects responsibly

Considering what happens to young researchers after a research project ends necessitates thinking through how support can be phased out ethically and responsibly. It raises questions about the ongoing ethical obligations towards those who have contributed to the research project, particularly if they are vulnerable individuals. In this respect, three key informants highlighted that C&YP not only need support during their involvement, but that they would also like assistance to transition into independence after their active contribution to a participatory project has ended (Ints. 7, 8, 9 & 10). This highlights that researchers need to have protocols and procedures for closing projects and must consider how to resource this when developing bids.

34 Guidance developed by Save the Children (2005) and Veitch with Corazon Buala (2007) offer useful discussion of the minimum standards for children's participation in consultations.

35 One young researcher who had served as a member of an advisory panel for more than ten years described a discrepancy between the 'cocooned world of participation' where young people (often, but not always current or former 'beneficiaries') are validated, supported and 'cotton-wooled' within the participatory projects and the 'real world', where their experiences and skills may not have the same currency and may not be recognised, for instance, by future employers (Int. 9).

36 There are number of available resources providing guidance on engaging vulnerable C&YP in dissemination, campaigning and advocacy activities in the context of sexual violence research and related areas. These include SVRI's 'Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on the Perpetration of Sexual Violence' (Jewkes, Dartnall, and Sikweyiya; 2012); 'Growing up on the Streets Knowledge Exchange Training Pack' (Bennett et al., 2016); and 'Youth Journal: Good practices of child and youth initiatives in the prevention of commercial sexual exploitation of children' (ECPAT, 2015).

37 A useful overview of the ethical and practical issues regarding remuneration involving individuals and groups in LMIC in research can be found in guidance developed by the global charitable foundation Wellcome. See **https://wellcome.ac.uk/funding/managing-grant/guidance-notes-research-involving-people-low-and-middle-income-countries**

PART 3:
REFLECTIONS FOR RESEARCH PRACTICE

3.1 Ensuring safe engagement of vulnerable C&YP in participatory research

The scoping review has illustrated the pivotal importance of ensuring the physical and emotional well-being of all parties involved in participatory (and non-participatory) sexual violence research. Considerations as to whether it is safe and appropriate to involve vulnerable C&YP in such research are particularly pertinent given the highly sensitive nature of the topic and the significant challenges associated with involving vulnerable groups. Such decisions should not be taken lightly and need to be preceded by comprehensive risk and capacity assessments for those who are to be involved as participant-researchers and respondents and those who plan to facilitate the research and support them.

3.2 Risk and needs assessments

Individualised risk and needs assessments should be carried out for children and young people who will potentially be involved in participatory research on sexual violence. Decisions as to whether their safe and positive involvement is possible should be assessed on a case-by-case basis and should engage the child/young person concerned. Where possible (and commensurate with age and capacity) C&YP should be involved in conversations about the risks associated with their engagement in the research and about whether these can be managed. These conversations should focus on what needs to be in place to enable their safe participation. The primary concern should always be that participatory research does not put the child/young person, or any of the adults involved, at risk of harm, while the potential benefits (and hence risks and negative implications of excluding individuals from such opportunities) should also be taken into consideration.

3.3 Capacity assessments

Conducting capacity assessments of those planning to facilitate participatory research with C&YP people can help to ensure that staff are well equipped to handle ethical concerns, including those relating to child protection, and that initiatives are appropriately planned, designed and resourced. Considering who holds responsibility for supporting C&YP involved in research (both young researchers and respondents), and what resources staff and participants will require, both during and after their involvement, must be a central part of ethical project planning. As part of this, professional researchers may need to acknowledge their personal and professional limitations (for example, due to a lack of therapeutic experience) and collaborate with other services or professionals who can provide relevant forms of support. The boundaries of the role of a professional researcher in a participatory research initiative raise complex questions and are likely to vary. Identifying and making these boundaries transparent is therefore crucial. Participatory processes involving closer, longer-term relationships between professional researchers and C&YP may have real benefits in this context, although there are significant time and resource implications.

3.4 Training and support needs of professional and participant researchers

The challenges discussed in this scoping review highlight the importance of providing adequate levels of support and training for both C&YP and adults involved in participatory research. If this is not provided, Brown (2006) notes a risk of imposing responsibilities on C&YP for which they are insufficiently prepared or lack the necessary skills or confidence to undertake. Equally, if professionals are not adequately equipped themselves, for instance if they lack the relevant skills and knowledge in relation to trauma-informed working practices, or if initiatives are not appropriately funded and resourced, this can render participation tokenistic, or worse, put those involved at risk of harm.

It is important that participatory research is underpinned by specialist training, good leadership, management structures and an organisational commitment to this type of work. Building in time for reflection, proper supervision and regular de-briefs can help to safeguard both adult professionals and participant-researchers against the harmful effects of secondary or vicarious trauma. Reflective practice and shared decision making can promote an environment in which professionals feel safe to raise concerns and to respond appropriately to emerging issues or risks.

A list of practice resources identified through the scoping review has been included in Appendix H.

3.5 Resource implications

Involving vulnerable C&YP in participatory research has significant resource implications. These must be considered and realistically reflected in funding bids and project planning. Funders must recognise the real and often hidden costs of good participatory research practice. Enabling trauma-informed practice, onward referrals, meeting additional support needs and planning for proper dissemination and sustainability all require additional resources, which should be anticipated at the outset. Helping funders recognise the costs involved with participatory research with C&YP is essential to promoting the development of safe and ethical practice.

3.6 Promoting understanding of sexual violence

Many of the challenges discussed in this report demonstrate the need to foster critical reflection and engagement with the topic of sexual violence and with patriarchal social norms and beliefs (see Dartnall and Gevers, 2017). Due to their ability to promote critical reflection and their potential to build the capacity of those involved, participatory research projects addressing SVAC can contribute to promoting better understanding of sexual violence, both at individual and collective levels. Again, this raises pertinent questions about the level of preparation, the content of training, and the support that is needed to adequately equip adult and young researchers for participatory research in this field.

As noted previously, this work must be underpinned by specialised training, an understanding of trauma-informed work and a critical engagement with patriarchal social norms. This requires prioritising time and space in the process for dialogue, reflection and debate. It also prompts the complex question of how to address gendered social norms that normalise sexualised forms of violence in practice. Although there are some promising initiatives, such as the 'GREAT' project in northern Uganda,[38] that use a range of tools to promote critical engagement with gender inequality at the local level and to promote sexual and reproductive health issues in community contexts (Adams, Salazar and Lundgren, 2013; Igras et al., 2014), more needs to be done globally to address patriarchal belief systems and social norms that underpin gendered and sexualised forms of violence.

3.7 Promoting ethical research practice

Ethical research practice needs to be underpinned by high levels of expertise and research infrastructure, including capable ethics committees who can scrutinise and apply sound ethical judgment to participatory research proposals. Instead of taking an overly risk-averse or punitive approach to reviewing ethics applications, however, it may be helpful if ethics boards offered clear guidelines, advice and support on how to navigate the risks identified in research proposals. This can enhance the creation of ethically sound research on sensitive and difficult topics and build the capacity of researchers to involve vulnerable C&YP in safe participatory ways.

The report highlighted three key areas for improvement:

> (i) There is a need to promote understanding of participatory approaches, and the value of these, across ethics committees. In addition to facilitating appropriate assessment of relevant project proposals, this could equip more ethics committees to offer tailored guidance.
>
> (ii) There is a need to engage with ethical and legal issues arising from international research projects. Clarity about who holds responsibility for ethical and legal obligations relating to child protection, and how these can be enforced and monitored across different countries, is critical. This is especially significant when undertaking research in contexts where referral mechanisms may not work well and relevant services for those subject to sexual violence are not readily available.
>
> (iii) There is a need to further develop capacity, infrastructure, knowledge and awareness of ethical considerations in research involving vulnerable groups across the wider research community. Strengthening the global 'ethics infrastructure' is necessary to facilitate a more consistent enforcement of high ethical standards across diverse contexts. Partnerships between institutions with high levels of experience and expertise in using participatory methods and those whose expertise is still developing may be particularly beneficial in this context. This can help to develop capacity to promote the ethical and meaningful involvement of C&YP in sexual violence research.

3.8 Redressing geographic biases

Due to the limitations discussed in Part 1, the report did not review the literature emerging from LMIC as much as might have been desirable. The broader literature highlights a gap in knowledge on issues relating to sexual violence against C&YP, including prevalence data, from LMIC. This highlights the need to encourage and fund more research activities in these regions to reduce biases towards HIC and establish a more representative picture of sexual violence affecting C&YP globally.

3.9 Validating different types of knowledge and knowledge creation

The scepticism toward participatory research, its scientific rigour, and the validity of evidence resulting from such approaches is well documented (Challenging Heights, 2013; McLean and Modi, 2016; Plan, 2009; van Blerk, Shand and Shanahan, 2017). In the face of this, there is a clear need to confirm the values of participatory approaches, indicating that more research and evaluation activity is needed to rigorously assess and document the impact of participatory research.

At the same time, the report has highlighted the need to accommodate and validate a variety of ways of conducting research in this field and to recognise different types of knowledge and methods of knowledge creation. This also requires acknowledging C&YP's role in this process, to recognise their competencies to meaningfully contribute to the evidence base and their capacity to enhance our understanding of sexual violence.

3.10 Choosing appropriate levels of participation

A key message emerging from the scoping review is that the desire to promote C&YP's engagement in research on sexual violence should not override the principle of ethical and meaningful participation. Despite offering some clear benefits, it should not be assumed that participatory research necessarily produces 'better' research (Holland et al., 2010, p. 373), nor should it be assumed that participatory research is automatically an 'empowering' experience for those involved, particularly if the aims of the research are not linked to advocacy for social change (Doná, 2007).

Different forms and levels of C&YP's participation in research have validity, if fit for purpose. The focus should therefore be on 'how' C&YP are engaged in the research process rather than on 'how much' participation is achieved (Gallagher, 2008; Holland,

38 More information and resources can be found on the GREAT website, see **www.stories.irh.org/download-resources/**

et. al., 2010; McCarry, 2012).[39] It is argued here that it may be more appropriate to offer differentiated degrees and levels of involvement in various stages of the research, and enact these well, rather than

> "...trying to enmesh C&YP in all aspects of the research." (McCarry, 2012, p. 64).

Researchers and funders should critically examine on a case-by-case basis whether it is appropriate to involve vulnerable C&YP in participatory research, to consider what purpose and whose needs their involvement serves, and whether participation can be enacted ethically and meaningfully in a given context. The following questions,[40] though by no means an exhaustive list, may be helpful for professional researchers when considering adopting participatory approaches in this field of work:

What is the scope in the research process for C&YP to exert influence?

- What are the external and internal structures that define the context in which the research takes place and how do these affect power-sharing arrangements between those involved in the research project, and specifically between adults and C&YP?
- Is the locus of power and responsibility to manage the research transparent to all involved, i.e. does everyone know who holds ultimate responsibility, or how responsibility is shared?
- What are the funders' responsibilities and levels of input within the process of research?
- To what extent are we, as professional researchers able to, or consider it right to, hand over responsibility to C&YP?

How do participatory approaches add value?

- How will a participatory approach add value to the research process and outcome?
- Does it help to identify research questions of relevance to C&YP and their communities?
- Will it help to answer the research question(s)?
- Which C&YP should or can be involved?
- How can we promote inclusive practice and enable participation of C&YP with different needs and perspectives?
- Whose voices will be missing?

Is the participatory approach considered appropriate in the context?

- Is it appropriate for researchers and others involved in the research, considering individual characteristics and vulnerabilities?
- Is the approach feasible and appropriate in the context in which the research takes place (e.g. community, policy discourse, academic field)?
- How can we ensure involvement of C&YP in the research is meaningful rather than tokenistic, i.e. how do we ensure we are not involving C&YP to tick the 'participation box' or validate our findings?

Are the approaches considered safe and ethical?

- Does the research adhere to rigorous ethical standards? Are these internationally recognised and comprehensive?
- Do adult and young researchers understand the importance of confidentiality, anonymity and data protection?
- What are the benefits and risks of involving a child or young person in the research and how are these identified and assessed?
- Can we take time to understand the specific situation of the individual child/young person, their needs, vulnerabilities and competencies?
- Can any identified risks be mitigated or managed effectively?
- Are we able, where appropriate, to actively involve C&YP in risk and needs assessment processes?
- What are the possible negative implications of excluding C&YP from the research process?
- Will adult and young researchers receive adequate levels of training and support to undertake the research in a way that minimises harm and maximises benefits?
- What level of emotional and practical support might C&YP need before, during and after their involvement in the project and are there resources to support access to this?
- Can we support transition and ensure that participatory research continues after the life of the specific project, supporting and benefitting young researchers beyond their involvement in the project?

What is the remit of safeguarding responsibilities in the research context?

- Have we put in place robust safeguarding measures and referral pathways?
- How are adult and participant researchers supported to deal with disclosures?
- Given that safeguarding standards vary across the globe, how do we ensure consistency in international projects?
- Is it sufficient to refer safeguarding responsibilities to local partners and if so, how do we monitor that safeguarding obligations are met?
- What are the research expectations with regard to improving outcomes for C&YP who have been victimised? How do we clarify and manage expectations, in terms of what level of support C&YP can expect?

39 The extent of participation, defined here, is the degree to which C&YP can exert influence over the research agenda, design and process. This depends on the nature of the research, the context in which the research takes place and the resources available to support C&YP's participation. This in turn relates to broader discussions about children's participation, which argue that actual influence should be viewed as the key measure of whether participation is appropriate and meaningful (Gallagher, 2008).

40 Whilst many of the questions emerged from the scoping review, they build on work that has been developed collaboratively over the past years in the International Centre including Warrington (2016) *Children and young people's participation in the International Centre: researching child sexual exploitation, violence and trafficking – an ethical working paper.*

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SEARCH PROTOCOL

PARTICIPATION LITERATURE REVIEW: SCOPING DOCUMENT

Title of the project:

'Being Heard': Promoting ethical and meaningful participation of children in research on sexual violence

Project outline:

One of the key aims of the 'Being Heard' project is to investigate and support ways for young people to be actively involved in research on sexual violence. To this end, we will conduct an international scoping exercise to explore models of engaging children and young people in research on sexual violence. The aim of the scoping review is to investigate participatory research initiatives with children and young people to share good practice and enable more researchers to ethically and meaningfully involve children and young people in studies on sexual violence.

The scoping will explore such issues as:

Definitions

- How is 'participation' conceptualised in the research, policy and professional literature?
- How do we define 'children and young people'? What are the specific issues relating to different age groups, capabilities, experience, etc.?
- What meanings are given to 'participation' in the context of research on sexual violence involving children and young people? Which concepts are agreed, which are contested?
- How do we operationalise 'participation' for research?

Participation models and techniques

- What is the range of participative models and techniques deployed in sexual violence research and/or participatory research with children and young people?
- What do we know to work, or not work, with specific groups and in different contexts?
- What do we know about the accessibility, acceptability and effectiveness of these different approaches (e.g. consultations, action research, etc.)?
- What initiatives exist internationally that engage young people in studies on sexual violence? Have outcomes of such initiatives been evaluated or documented?

Evidence base

- What evidence exists regarding the replicability of participative research models?
- What do we know about the effectiveness of participation work?
- What are the benefits of engaging young people in studies on sexual violence and what is the supporting evidence base?
- What evidence exists regarding the conditions that need to be in place to make participative research on sexual violence with different groups of young people possible and effective? Are there examples of good practice?

Feasibility

- What needs to be considered when involving young people in research on sexual violence?
- What are the (ethical, logistical or other) challenges surrounding young people's participation in research on sexual violence?
- How can researchers make good decisions about weighing up the risks versus benefits of involving young people in studies on sexual violence? Which considerations need to inform decisions as to whether participatory models are appropriate?

Ethics

- What ethics guidelines exist? What needs to be included in ethical protocols to ensure the safety and well-being of participants during their involvement in a research project?
- What skills and knowledge do ethics boards need to assess research protocols for ethical compliance?
- What skills and knowledge do ethics boards need to assess research protocols involving young researchers undertaking research on sexual violence for ethical compliance?

Capacity building

- What are the support and training needs of researchers interested in participatory research?
- What support and training do young people need to be able to successfully engage in participatory research?
- What examples of effective and meaningful participatory research are there?
- How can learning on youth participation in sexual violence research best be shared and disseminated?
- How can this learning be operationalised? Are there case studies and other good practice examples that can inform the development of a 'toolkit' for researchers interested in participatory research with young people on sexual violence that would pull together guidance on how to engage with an ethics committee, check lists for risk assessments, ethical protocols, and other tools, to support capacity building?

Summary of key questions

1. How is participatory research on sexual violence with children and young people conceived and defined?
2. What is/are the rationale(s) for children and young people's participation in research about sexual violence?
3. What strategies or approaches have been used to support children and young people's participatory involvement in research on sexual violence?
4. What challenges face researchers undertaking participatory research with children and young people on sexual violence?
5. What are the key ethical, methodological and logistical issues emerging from children and young people's participatory involvement in research on sexual violence?
6. What are the benefits or contributions of participatory research methods in this field?

Which sectors will the scoping cover?

- **Sexual violence against children and young people**
- **Gender-based violence**
- **Child sexual abuse**
- **Child abuse, maltreatment and neglect**
- **Commercial child sexual exploitation**
- **Child trafficking**

Participatory research methodology

- Participatory and community research
- Community development including models and methods of community-led development of services?
- International development?
- Children's rights/human rights
- Ethics

Marginalised C&YP (non sexual violence specific)

- Street-based youth
- Public health
  - Sexual and reproductive rights
  - Sexual and reproductive health
- Youth justice (overlapping issues relating to ethics e.g. in group work)?

What is the geographical remit?

International

Range of sources

- **Research reviews** – specifically those relating to sexual violence/participation of young people in research
- **Academic papers** – theoretical/evaluative/practice examples
- **Evaluations**
- **NGO/voluntary sector reports/practice examples/evaluations** (including grey literature)
- **Official reports** (including from national governments/statutory agencies and international agencies, organisations and institutions)
- **Practice resources** see – http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/1654-qualitative.html
- **Key informants/experts** – send out email requests for literature from experts and existing networks (SVRI, ECPAT, ISPCAN etc.).

Other inclusion and exclusion criteria?

Include if:

- **post 1989** (based on CA1989 and fact that small amount of key participation literature emerged in the 1990s)
- **all countries if material is available in English**
- **relates to young people under 25 (unless specific to sexual violence/abuse)**

Exclude if:

- **not focused on 'marginalised' children and young people**
- **not related to the definition/discussion/practice of a participative approach**
- **doesn't include any potential for methodological learning**

Databases

NB also databases produced as part of International Centre projects to date

1. Social Care Online
2. ASSIA
3. Discover
4. SocINDEX
5. Sage Premier
6. Google scholar
7. British Library EthOS
8. Cochrane Library
9. Campbell Collection
10. PsycARTICLES
11. PsycINFO
12. pubmed
13. Hand searches of organisational websites (websites of NGOs; INGOs; UN agencies; relevant networks; research/academic institutions, Childhub, Participatorymethods, Save the Children, CRIN, SCIE, NSPCC's Inform)

Relevant search terms, key words etc.?

All in relation to 'marginalised' C&YP; and in combination

First level search terms:

Participat*
Sexual violence/child abuse/maltreatment/neglect
Consultat*
Child*
Youth/young people/adolescent(s)/young person(s)
Sexual violence

Methodology set:

- participation and variations of participatory approaches
- consultation(s)
- research with children/young people
- consultation with children/young people
- children's rights
- human rights
- children's/young people's voice(s)
- ethics
- sensitive issues
- compliance
- advocacy

Violence set:

- violence
- maltreatment
- neglect
- abuse
- sexual violence
- sexual abuse
- (child/commercial) sexual exploitation
- risk
- grooming
- internet grooming/cyber violence

Children and young people set:

- child*
- young people/youth/young person
- adolescent(s)

Correlates set:

- marginalised/marginalisation
- vulnerability/ies
- gender
- sexuality/ies
- ethnicity/ies
- 'race'
- disability/ies
- accessibility/ies
- poor health outcome(s); poor (adolescent) sexual/mental/physical health
- youth offending/offences
- crime/criminalisation/criminal

NB: The large number of 'variants' terms may need to be limited and revised in view of time.

Warrington, C. (2017): *Participatory research and children's participation: Concept note*

BEING HEARD:
Concept note: Defining 'participatory research' and children's participation (abbreviated version)

Overview

Defining participatory research

For the purposes of this review '*participatory research*' is taken to mean any research in which there is a degree of collaboration between those who are normally solely the 'subjects' of research and those undertaking research. For these purposes 'collaboration' is defined broadly as including any opportunities to inform the research process which extend beyond solely providing data (e.g. undertaking an interview; completing a survey). This may include informing research questions; sampling; research design; governance; data collection; analysis; reporting and dissemination. Degrees of collaboration (and therefore 'participatory practice') will vary along a spectrum from opportunities to consult on some of these issues to research which is fully instigated and led by participant/researchers. A useful model to characterise this spectrum is a three-tier typology of consultative, collaborative and participant-led practice (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2015).

Qualitative research practice which involves interviews, surveys or focus groups but does not enable participants to inform the research process in any way (beyond providing personal data) is NOT classed as *participatory research* in this project.

While *creative research methods*, *ethnographic research* and *consultation work* are NOT synonymous with participatory research we recognise some clear overlap. In cases where data collection methods enable participants to have a high degree of control and inform the questions asked or how they are asked or take part in 'sense making' and analysis (even within an individual interview) this may be considered aligned to participatory research practice (at the consultative end of the spectrum). For the purposes of this project this type of work will also be considered within this review.

To complete the scoping review of participatory research on sexual violence affecting children and young people we start from a shared understanding of the meaning of 'participatory research' as follows:

> "A range of methodological approaches and techniques, all with the objective of handing power from the researcher to research participants... Participatory research involves inquiry, but also action."
> (participatesdgs.org, n.d.)

The language of 'participatory research', though used variably in different contexts, can be taken to denote some shared principles

and assumptions. Three key characteristics of participatory research are:

A focus on collaboration among stakeholders: this means a shift in the positionality of those who have traditionally been the 'subject' of research, to take on active roles developing and delivering the research, usually in partnership with researchers or practitioners themselves. As Pain (2004) suggests:

> "The keystone of Participatory Research is that it involves those conventionally 'researched' in some or all stages of research, from problem definition through to dissemination and action." (p. 652)

A concern with social action: this means that research is concerned with outputs and influence beyond the generation of knowledge or theory to generate tangible benefits and changes for those involved – either as individuals or communities. Social action may include the capacity building inherent in these processes, campaigning work, and/or influencing and changing practice (as in a participatory action research project). As Williams and Brydon-Miller note (2004), participatory action research

> "...combines aspects of popular education, community-based research, and action for social change. Emphasizing collaboration within marginalized or oppressed communities, participatory action research works to address the underlying causes of inequality while at the same time focusing on finding solutions to specific community concerns" (p. 245)

Opportunities for research participants to self-represent: the collaborative approach at the heart of participatory research offers research participants – or those whose lives, concerns or communities are being investigated – an opportunity to represent themselves and/or their concerns more directly rather than being depicted by others. This marks a critical shift in traditional research relationships and specifically addresses some of the key concerns about perpetuating traditional hierarchies and power relations associated with representation. As Plummer (1995) notes

> "[Telling your story] under conditions of one's own choosing is part of the political process".

It also aligns to broader concerns with valuing multiple subjectivities as opposed to searching for objective 'truths' in research.

Rationale and benefits: Redressing traditional power dynamics

Considered together, these three characteristics mean that there is an underlying concern in all participatory research with issues of power. Specifically, this means a commitment to redressing some of the traditional power dynamics inherent within normative processes of research and associated dissemination activities: what Fals Borda defines as '*bottom up*' approaches to knowledge generation (1982).

As a result, participatory research is unlikely to position itself as 'politically neutral' but rather actively seeks to address issues of social justice. As Pain notes:

> "...one of the main benefits of participatory research... is its ability to forefront the perspectives of marginalized groups and actively challenge social exclusion with them." (Pain, 2004)

Broadly speaking, the rationale for participatory research can be split into two themes: epistemological (or instrumental) and political (or moral). In epistemological terms, participatory research may be providing a means of accessing unique insight or perspectives, which some argue can only be held by those with direct experience of a phenomenon. This rationale suggests that participatory research approaches improve understanding of phenomena. In political terms, participatory research recognises that control of the production of knowledge and related discourses are fundamental acts of exerting power (Foucault, 1980) and therefore seeks to subvert the existing relationships of power. It suggests a role for research in creating

> "...social spaces where people can make meaningful contributions to their own well-being and not serve as objects of investigation." (Benmayor, 1991)

Diversity and degrees of participation

Despite these shared characteristics, it is important to acknowledge the diversity of research practice that may be considered participatory. Participatory research takes on several guises and uses a range of diverse techniques. It is used in a range of research disciplines and settings, including, but not limited to, social geography; health research; applied social research; international development; child and youth studies and practice and community settings.

Another key aspect of this diversity is *the degree* to which ownership and control are transferred to different stakeholders – and specifically to those who have traditionally solely been the subjects of research. This will vary both between research projects and within different aspects of the same research project. So, for example, a research project led by academic researchers may work collaboratively with a range of stakeholders during data collection and possibly analysis phases but offer little opportunity for partnership during the writing up or representation of that research. Alternatively, community-based organisations who employ a researcher to support their own work may lead and manage an entire action research process and take control of how the findings are used. Equally, different individuals among the same stakeholder groups within a project will experience different levels of influence and control within the research processes.

History

Defining participatory research is supported by a basic understanding of its development and key influences. Broadly speaking, key influences on the development of participatory research can be associated with a range of sources (Herlihy and Knapp, 2003), many of which originate from the global South. These include: community work and social pedagogy from Latin America (Freire, 1970); participatory rural appraisal techniques used in development work across the global South (Chambers, 1997; Boyden and Ennew, 1997); participatory action research (Fals Borda, 1982) and the 'action research' model from which it is derived (Lewin, 1946); and feminist research (McIntyre, 2000). In addition, there are close parallels with the movement prompting service user involvement in health and social care research (Beresford and Carr, 2012). Considering these diverse influences, it is apparent that they share concerns with social justice; challenging traditional hierarchies involved in knowledge development; privileging 'seldom heard voices' within research processes and outputs; and creating social change.

Given the issues around the marginalisation and vulnerabilities associated with childhood it is no surprise that a significant body of participatory research has concerned itself with children's lives and involving children and young people in research processes. The development of children's participation in research coincides with wider concerns with children's participation rights as enshrined in the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and subsequent policy and practice developments globally (Hart, 1997). It can also be linked to simultaneous thinking developed by the sociology of childhood (James and Prout,1990) which sought to highlight children's agency and challenge ideas about children as passive 'unknowing' subjects.

Defining children's participation

In line with Article 12 of the UNCRC, one common definition of children's participation (not specific to research) is: the right of all children and young people to be involved and influential in decision-making about issues which affect their lives and those of their communities, in accordance with their evolving capacity. Other writers highlight a need to also focus on evidence of children's influence and change resulting from children's involvement in decision-making (Gallagher, 2008). Similarly Save the Children define the core purpose of children's participation as

> "...[empowering] children as individuals and members of civil society, thus giving them the opportunity to influence their own lives." (Save the Children, 2005)

Several frameworks have been developed to help assess and characterise children's participation (Hart, 1992; Treseder, 1997; Lansdown, 2001; Shier, 2001 and Reddy and Ratna, 2002). All of these models share a concern with differentiating participatory practice by the degree to which children hold ownership and control. Lansdown and O'Kane's recent framework for monitoring and evaluating children's participation (2015) provides a broad and accesible summary of these degrees into three levels of participation: *consultative*; *collaborative* and *child-led* (see Figure 1 in the report).

Shaw, Brady and Davey (2011) have mapped these levels onto the research process depicted diagrammatically (see Figure 2 in the report) – showing increasing levels of research involvement:

- Children as research subjects
- Children **consulted** on aspects of research process
- Children **collaborate** and work in partnership with researchers
- Children **supported to lead and have ownership** of research activity

It is possible for children and young people's participation to take place at several of these levels simultaneously within a single research project. Many writers (including Hart, 2009) stress a need to avoid viewing different levels of children's participation as a 'hierarchy'. Instead they highlight that different levels of participation are possible or appropriate at different times, depending on the capacity, interests and circumstances of individuals, the funders' requirements, and resources available to the project. It is valid to recognise, however, that collaborative research and the facilitation of child-led research initiatives are undertaken more infrequently due to intensive resource requirements and more challenging power-sharing arrangements. Children's involvement may take place during part or all of the research process including (but not limited to) the following activities: defining research questions; research governance and planning; data collection; analysis and reporting; and dissemination.

Finally it is worth noting that an important consideration when thinking about children's participation (as opposed to adult participation) both in research and practice is the interplay between children's rights to participation and their rights to protection. While the UNCRC proposes the principle of 'the indivisibility of rights' and highlights their mutual dependency, much has been written about the tension between protection and participation rights (Healy, 1998; Archard, 2004; Hinton, 2008; Healy and Darlington, 2009). In reality it would appear that a pragmatic approach is often adopted that has tended to prioritise children's protection rights above those of participation (Feinstein and O'Kane, 2008). There is evidence that this tension may be particularly pronounced in work addressing children and young people viewed as particularly marginalised or vulnerable.

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Foucault, M. (1980) 'Two Lectures', in C. Gordon (ed.), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

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Hart, R. (1997) *Children's participation: The theory and practice of involving young citizens in community development and environmental care*. New York/London: Earthscan/UNICEF Publications.

Hart, R. (2009) 'Charting change in the participatory settings of childhood' in N. Thomas (ed.) *Children, politics and communication: participation at the margins*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Healy, K. (1998) 'Participation and child protection: The importance of context', *The British Journal of Social Work*, 28(6), pp. 897-914.

Healy, K. and Darlington, Y. (2009) 'Service user participation in diverse child protection contexts: principles for practice', *Child & Family Social Work*, 14(4), pp. 420-430.

Herlihy, P. H. and Knapp, G. (2003) 'Maps of, by, and for the peoples of Latin America', *Human organization*, 62, pp. 303-314.

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James, A. and Prout, A. (1990) *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood*. Basingstoke: The Falmer Press.

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Lewin, K. (1946) 'Action research and minority problems', *Journal of social issues*, 2(4), pp. 34-46.

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Shaw, Brady and Davey (2011) *Guidelines for research with children and young people*. London: NCB.

Shier, H. (2001) 'Pathways to Participation: openings, opportunities and obligations', *Children and Society*, 15, pp. 107-117.

Treseder, P. (1997) *Empowering children & young people training manual: promoting involvement in decision making*. London: Save the Children.

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APPENDIX C: ACADEMIC LITERATURE REVIEW

List of final inclusions after two stages of coding

Category 1: Literature on participatory research methods, children and young people and sexual violence (or other relevant marginalised groups/issues)

DATABASE: ASSIA

Blanchet-Cohen, N. (2014) 'Researching violence with conflict-affected young people: context and process', *Child Indicators Research*, 7(3), pp. 517-535.

Brown, K (2006) 'Participation and young people involved in prostitution', *Child Abuse Review*, 15, pp. 294-312.

Houghton, C. (2015) 'Young people's perspectives on participatory ethics: Agency, power and impact in domestic abuse research and policy-making', *Child Abuse Review*, 24, pp. 235-248.

McClain, N. and Amar, A. F. (2013) 'Female survivors of child sexual abuse: Finding voice through research participation', *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 34(7), pp. 482-487.

Ruiz-Casares, M., Rousseau, C., Morlu, J. and Browne, C. (2013) 'Eliciting children's perspectives of risk and protection in Liberia: How to do it and why does it matter?', *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 42(5) pp. 425-437.

DATABASE: NSPCC Inform

Matthew, L. and Barron, I. G. (2015) 'Participatory action research on help-seeking behaviors of self-defined ritual abuse survivors: a brief report...', *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 24(4), pp. 429-443.

DATABASE: International Journal of Qualitative Methods

Barlow, C. A. and Hurlock, D. (2013) 'Group meeting dynamics in a community-based participatory research Photovoice project with exited sex trade workers', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 12(1), pp. 132-151.

DATABASE: Sage Premier General

Chappell, P., Rule, P., Dlamini, M. and Nkala, N. (2014) 'Troubling power dynamics: Youth with disabilities as co-researchers in sexuality research in South Africa', *Childhood*, 21(3), pp. 385-399.

Coser, L. R., Tozer, K., Van Borek, N., Tzemis, D., Taylor, D., Saewyc, E. and Buxton, J. A. (2014) 'Finding a voice: participatory research with street-involved youth in the youth injection prevention project', *Health Promotion Practice*, 15(5), pp. 732-738.

DATABASE: Reflective Learning in Action Research

Busza, J. (2004) 'Participatory research in constrained settings: Sharing challenges from Cambodia', *Action Research*, 2(2), pp.191-208.

Gerassi, L., Edmond, T., and Nichols, A. (2017) 'Design strategies from sexual exploitation and sex work studies among women and girls: Methodological considerations in a hidden and vulnerable population', *Action research*, 15(2), pp.161-176.

Graça, M., Gonçalves, M. and Martins, A. (2017) 'Action research with street-based sex workers and outreach team: a co-authored case study', *Action Research* 0(0), pp.1-29.

Martin, L. (2013) 'Sampling and sex trading: Lessons on research design from the street', *Action Research*, 11(3), pp. 220-235.

van der Meulen, E. (2015) 'Action research with sex workers: Dismantling barriers and building bridges', *Action Research*, 9(4), pp. 370-384.

Walakira, E. J. (2010) 'Reflective learning in action research: A case of micro-interventions for HIV prevention among the youth in Kakira-Kabembe, Jinja, Uganda', *Action Research*, 8(1), pp. 53-70.

DATABASE: Social Index

Wallace-Henry, C. (2015) 'Unveiling Child Sexual Abuse through Participatory Action Research', *Social and Economic Studies*, 64(1), pp.13-36.

Category 2: Literature on participatory research methods and children and young people

DATABASE: DISCOVER

Alderson, P. (2000) 'Research by children', *International Journal of Research Methodology*, 4, pp.139–153.

Bradford, S. and Cullen, F. (eds.) (2013) *Research and research methods for youth practitioners*. London: Routledge.

Greig, A. D., Taylor, J. and MacKay, T. (2012). *Doing research with children: A practical guide*. Sage.

Jupp-Kina, V. (2015) 'Exploring the personal nature of children and young people's participation: a participatory action research study', *SAGE Research Methods Cases*. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446273050145564 57

Lowes, L. and Hulatt, I. (eds.) (2013) *Involving service users in health and social care research*. London: Routledge.

Richards, S., Clark, J. and Boggis, A. (2015) *Ethical research with children: Untold narratives and taboos*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

DATABASE: ASSIA

Hamenoo, E. S. and Sottie, C. A. (2015) 'Stories from Lake Volta: The lived experiences of trafficked children in Ghana', *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 40, pp.103-112.

Jones, J. and Myers, J. (1997) 'The future detection and prevention of institutional abuse: Giving children a chance to participate in research', *Early Child Development and Care*, 133(1), pp.115-125.

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McCrady, B. S. and Bux, D. A. (1999) 'Ethical issues in informed consent with substance abusers', *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 67(2), pp. 186-193.

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DATABASE: NSPCC

Bradbury-Jones, C. (2014) *Children as co-researchers: The need for protection*. Edinburgh: Dunedin Academic Press.

Ellard-Gray, A., Jeffrey, N. K., Choubak, M. and Crann, S. E. (2015) 'Finding the hidden participant: solutions for recruiting hidden, hard-to-reach, and vulnerable populations.', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 14(5), pp. 1-10.

Harley, A. (2012) 'Picturing reality: Power, ethics, and politics in using Photovoice', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 11(4), pp. 320-339.

Hill, M. (1997) 'Participatory research with children', *Child & Family Social Work*, 2(3), pp. 171-183.

Mallan, K. M., Singh, P. and Giardina, N. (2010) 'The challenges of participatory research with 'tech-savvy' youth', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 13(2), pp. 255-272.

Stuart, K., Maynard, L. and Rouncefield, C. (2015) *Evaluation practice for projects with young people: A guide to creative research*. London: Sage.

DATABASE: Sage Premier Action Research

Amsden, J. and Van Wynsberghe, R. (2005) 'Community mapping as a research tool with youth', *Action Research*, 3(4), pp. 357-381.

Eckstein, J. J. and Pinto, K. (2013) 'Collaborative participatory action strategies for re-envisioning young men's masculinities', *Action Research*, 11(3), pp. 236-252.

Flicker, S., Maley, O., Ridgley, A., Biscope, S., Lombardo, C. and Skinner, H. (2008) 'e-PAR: Using technology and participatory action research to engage youth in health promotion', *Action Research*, 6(3), pp. 285-303.

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DATABASE: Pub Med

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APPENDIX D: RESULTS OF GREY LITERATURE SEARCH

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APPENDIX E: MATERIALS SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO THE CALL FOR EVIDENCE

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APPENDIX F: INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS

BEING HEARD:
A scoping review to inform developing guidance for children and young people's participatory involvement in research about sexual violence

The 'Being Heard' research project

The International Centre: Researching Child Sexual Exploitation, Violence and Trafficking at the University of Bedfordshire, has been commissioned to undertake a scoping review to inform developing guidance for children and young people's participatory involvement in research about sexual violence.

The 'Being Heard' research project seeks to collect and review international evidence on young people's participatory involvement in research on sexual violence – including a consideration of the meaning, purpose, challenges and opportunities of doing so. It will then seek to apply this evidence base to the development of new draft international guidance to support researchers considering or undertaking participatory consultation or research with young people on sexual violence.

Interviews with key informants

As a professional with experience of conducting participatory research activities with children and young people to explore or address sexual violence, we would like to ask you to take part in a research interview as part of the review; whether or not you participate is entirely up to you.

The interview would last approximately one hour and take place at a time suitable for you over the phone, via Skype, or in person. It would be semi-structured and cover questions such as:

- How is participatory research on sexual violence with children and young people conceived and defined?
- What is/are the rationale(s) for children and young people's participation in research about sexual violence?
- What strategies or approaches have been used to support children and young people's participatory involvement in research on sexual violence?
- What challenges face researchers undertaking participatory research with children and young people on sexual violence?
- What are the key ethical issues emerging from children and young people's participatory involvement in research on sexual violence?
- What are the benefits or contributions of participatory research methods in this field?

The interview would be audio-recorded and transcribed (with your agreement) to ensure we have an accurate record of what you have told us.

Use of information

All information that you share in the course of an interview will only be used for the purposes of the research project, unless you or someone else is at risk of significant harm if we do not pass that information on. When information is to be used publicly (e.g. in a publication or presentation) any information identifying you will be removed. Participants will be identified by professional grouping (e.g. 'project manager' or 'researcher'), and not by name. You will have four weeks following the interview to withdraw your consent or retract any information you have shared, if you wish.

Notes of the interview will be transcribed, anonymised and securely stored in locked cabinets and password-protected computers. All original data (handwritten notes, recordings, etc.) will be securely destroyed 12 months after the completion of the project.

Complaints

If you are unhappy about how you are treated as part of the research, please get in touch with Dr Helen Beckett, Director of the International Centre at the University of Bedfordshire (helen.beckett@beds.ac.uk).

Further information

If you have any questions or require any further information about the research please do not hesitate to contact Dr Silvie Bovarnick (silvie.bovarnick@beds.ac.uk).

Please review the statements in the consent form below and if you agree with them and are happy to take part in an interview, please sign a copy of the consent form and return via email/post.

CONSENT FORM
for key informant interviews

Please sign at the bottom of the page to confirm that you have read and agree with the following statements:

- I have read and understood the information sheet about the Being Heard research review.
- I understand that taking part will mean being interviewed by a researcher over the phone, via Skype, or in person for approximately one hour.
- I understand that taking part is voluntary and I can withdraw from the research at any time without giving a reason.
- I understand that information from the interviews will be stored securely and treated confidentially.
- I understand that if I share any information about professional practice that raises concerns about significant harm to a child or young person (or vulnerable adult) this will be responded to by the research team in keeping with Keeping Children Safe standards (www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk) and information may be passed on to my manager or others responsible for safeguarding in my organisation.
- I understand that everything I say will be anonymised so that no one can identify me in the final report.
- I give my consent to be interviewed.

Signed:

_____

Please print your name:

_____

Are you happy for us to record the interview?

☐ **Yes**

All recordings will be stored securely, will not include your name, and will be destroyed 12 months after the project ends.

NOTE: if this form is returned by email, proof of signature will be obtained by printing a copy of the accompanying email and storing it with the completed form. Additional recorded verbal consent will be confirmed at the beginning of the interview audio-recording.

APPENDIX G: TOPIC GUIDE FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

1. Introduction to self and relationship to research on sexual violence with children and young people (C&YP) (or closely associated issues)
2. **Definition:** What is your understanding of participatory research; what does it look like in practice?
3. **Practice examples:** Can you describe some of the participatory research initiatives on sexual violence with C&YP that you have been involved with (either as researcher; facilitator; research manager; funder; participant)?
4. **Benefits:** In your experience, what are the benefits of these types of research approaches in exploring sexual violence?
5. **Limitations:** What are the limitations of these research approaches in exploring sexual violence?
6. **Strategies** (or useful learning) for undertaking or enabling participatory research with C&YP to address sexual violence. Possible prompts:
   - **a** strategies linked to particular research 'stages' – funding; planning; sampling; governance; data collection; analysis; reporting; dissemination, etc.
   - **b** strategies linked to involvement of different research stakeholders: funders; participants; community organisations; research institutions; research audiences, etc.
7. **Challenges** (and associated useful learning) when undertaking or enabling participatory research with C&YP to address sexual violence. Possible prompts:
   - **a** challenges linked to particular research 'stages' – funding; planning; sampling; governance; data collection; analysis; reporting; dissemination, etc.
   - **b** challenges linked to involvement of different research stakeholders: funders; participants; community organisations; research institutions; research audiences, etc.
8. **Ethical issues/dilemmas** that have emerged in this work.
9. **Resources:** What do you perceive a researcher needs in order to support more work of this kind to take place (including practical guidance or toolkit type resources)?

APPENDIX H: PRACTICE RESOURCES

Blogs

Ajema, C. and Muturi, N. (2017) *Children's voice in Sexual Violence Research and Programming: For how long will they remain silent?* Blog piece (published on 20.09.2017) Available at: http://www.svri.org/blog/children%E2%80%99s-voice-sexual-violence-research-and-programming-how-long-will-they-remain-silent (Last accessed: 2 March 2018).

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Conference Paper

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